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A GRAMMATICAL SKETCH OF MÒKPÈ (BAKWERI), BANTU A20

AUTHOR(S):

ATINDOGBE, Gratien

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	1
PREFACE.....	2
I. INTRODUCTION	5
1. Location of Mokpe Speakers	6
2. Mokpe and the Surrounding Languages	7
II. PHONOLOGY	8
1. Consonants.....	8
2. Vowels	10
3. Tones.....	11
1. Lexical tones.....	11
2. Grammatical tones	11
4. Realization of Segments	13
1. Consonants	13
2. Vowels	14
5. Syllable Structure.....	14
6. Phonological Rules	15
1. Deletion rules.....	15
2. Epenthetic rules	17
3. Feature changing rules.....	17
7. Tonal Rules	18
1. Tone deletion	18
2. Tone copy	19
3. Tone simplification.....	19
4. Meeussen's Rule (H-tone lowering).....	20
8. The Alphabet.....	21
1. Consonants: illustration	22
2. Vowels: illustration	23
3. Tones: illustration.....	23
4. Summary: the alphabet proper.....	24
5. Rules of orthography	25
6. The Mokpe alphabets.....	26
III. MORPHOLOGY: THE NOUN AND THE NOUN PHRASE.....	27
1. Nouns	27
1. Nouns of class 1 and class 2	28

2.	Nouns of class 3 and class 4	28
3.	Nouns of class 5 and class 6	29
4.	Nouns of class 7 and class 8	30
5.	Nouns of class 9 and class 10	31
6.	Nouns of class 14	33
7.	Nouns of class 19	34
8.	Summary of the morpho-phonological rules	35
9.	Summary of the paired classes	36
10.	Paired classes and meanings in Mokpe	37
11.	Verbal nouns	38
12.	Locative nouns	38
13.	Abstract nouns	39
14.	Mass concept	39
15.	Nominal derivations	39
16.	Compound nouns	41
17.	Nominal loans	42
18.	Marking syntactic relationship: agreement	43
19.	The Nominal Prefixes of Mokpe, Urbantu and Protobantu	44
2.	The Noun Phrase	44
1.	Qualifying the noun: adjectives	44
2.	Connexive	47
3.	Apposition	47
4.	Nominal possession or associative constructions	48
5.	Numerals	50
6.	Pronouns	55
7.	Prepositions and prepositional phrases	66
IV.	THE VERB AND THE VERB PHRASE	68
1.	Verbal Inflection	68
1.	The isolated and infinitive forms	68
2.	The verbal root templates	70
3.	The tonal groups of the verbs	70
4.	Compound verbs	72
5.	The subject and object (independent) pronouns	72
6.	The indicative mood	75
7.	The Imperative form	84
8.	The Hortative/Optative mood	86
9.	Subjunctive mood	87

10.	Conditional mood	90
11.	Infinitive phrases	96
12.	Gerund	97
2.	Verbal Derivation	97
1.	Applicative/Benefactive	97
2.	Comitative / Associative.....	98
3.	Associative reciprocal.....	99
4.	Causative	100
5.	Reflexive verbs	101
6.	Relationship	102
7.	Process through predicate past participle	103
8.	Neutro-passive	104
9.	Morpheme stacking	105
10.	Summary.....	106
3.	The Verb Phrase.....	107
1.	Marking of phase of action.....	107
2.	Quantification of action	112
3.	Manner of action.....	114
4.	Summary.....	116
5.	Time and locative adverbs	116
V.	SYNTAX.....	118
1.	Simple Sentence Construction	118
2.	Complex Sentence Constructions	124
1.	Qualification of the noun in the NP	124
2.	Copula +predicate sentence	124
3.	Juxtaposition of complements	125
4.	Consequence	125
5.	Circumstantial clause.....	125
6.	Destination, location.....	126
7.	Embedded (relative) clause	126
8.	Conditional clause	126
3.	Relative Clauses.....	127
4.	Questions	127
5.	Copula and Existential Sentences	128
1.	Quality: <i>βéli ndí</i> "be"	128
2.	Location: <i>βéli ó</i> "be"	129
3.	Stabilization with <i>éβéli ndí</i> : "it is"	129

4.	Stabilization with ó βéli ndí: "there is"	131
5.	Stabilization with -ŋg-: "that is"	131
6.	Stabilization with ndzê à βéli "who is?"	132
7.	Origin: -úwélélé (ndí)	133
8.	Passive with agent	134
6.	Useful Expressions	135
VI.	Word Lists	136
1.	English - Mokpe.....	136
1.	Nouns.....	136
2.	Adjectives	141
3.	Verbs.....	142
2.	Mokpe - English.....	147
1.	Nouns.....	147
2.	Adjectives	152
3.	Verbs.....	153
	NOTES.....	159
	REFERENCES.....	160
	SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	161

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1, 2, 3, ...	Noun class numbers
1pl	First person plural
1sg	First person singular
2pl	Second person plural
2sg	Second person singular
3pl	Third person plural
3sg	Third person singular
AdjCd	Adjective Concord
Adv	Adverb
APPL	Applicative
CAUS	Causative
Cd	Concord
Cl	Class
CLIT	Clitic
COND	Conditional
COORD	Coordinator
COP	Copula
DemPro	Demonstrative Pronoun
DemCd	Demonstrative Concord
DET	Determiner
FV	Final vowel
GenCd	Genitive Concord
GprnCd	General Proform Concord
IM	Infinitive Marker
InfxV	Infix Vowel
IntPro	Interrogative Pronoun
LOC	Locative
Neg	Negative Marker
NumCd	Numeral Concord
ObjP	Object Pronoun
OrdCd	Ordinal Concord
PASS	Passiv
PAST	Past
PN	Person's name

POS	Possessive Root
PosPro	Possessive Pronoun
PosCd	Possessive Concord
Pref	Prefix
PREP	Preposition
PRES	Present
PROC	Procedure
PROG	Progressive
RelPro	Relative Pronoun
RELAT	Relationship
SP	Subject Pronoun
TAM	Tense Aspect Mood
VerbP	Verb Prefix
VR	Verbal Root

FOREWORD

In Africa, many languages are spoken, but the size of most languages is relatively small. Consequently, many of these languages have not been studied, although each language is a facet in the long history of humankind and is an exhaustible cultural resource.

Although there are several descriptions of Mopke, they are fragmentary. Dr. Atindogbe's work is an attempt to fill this gap with his careful approach to the language. I hope that this book, although small, will serve not only as research material for linguistics scholars, but also as a grammar manual for those who would like to learn this precious language, including those who have, or almost have, forgotten it.

Shigeki KAJI

PREFACE

There are a number of scientific publications on the Mokpe (Mokpwe, Bakweri) language. From Rogozinsky (1903), Lorch (1908), Ardener (1968) to Atindogbé (2004; 2012), passing through Hombert (1973), Gensler (1980; 1981a; 1981b), Hawkinson (1986), Kagaya (1992a; 1992b; 1992c), Connell (1997, with material collected in the 1950s by Edwin Ardener), etc. there have been several studies on the structure of Mokpe in the various compartments of linguistics: phonology, tonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. However, none of these works is a coherent, homogenous bulk regrouping all these aspects in one volume (even small) and addressing the Mokpe language structure in a fluid way, with a discussion thread: grammar. So, the *A Grammatical Sketch of Mokpe* is my modest contribution to the noble enterprise to see the Mokpe language documented, described and ‘modernized’ for the native speakers, the scientific milieu and the general public. This is just the beginning of a more voluminous work, “*A Reference Grammar of Mokpe*” and this first attempt of a linguistically coherent work was a nice and rewarding experience. A number of reasons motivate this endeavor, but I will state just a few.

First, my primary goal is to provide a concise volume where the structure of the Mokpe language could be seen at a glance without having to turn many pages and to read savant terminology. This primary objective then set the pace for the methodology to be adopted: descriptive, structural and typological. I believe and hope that the absence of a sophisticated linguistic jargon will make this short version of the Mokpe language structure also accessible to non-linguistic knowledge readers. I am thinking, first and foremost, about the Bakweri children who are no longer speaking their language due to the exclusive reign of Cameroon Pidgin English as an unavoidable Lingua Franca of the Southwest Region, as well as English and French as the two official languages of Cameroon. My concern goes to the Bakweri students reading Linguistics who can now see how their language functions, how their language accommodate phonological processes such as assimilation, deletion, tone copying, etc. notions that look so unfamiliar and so abstract to them although they practice them in their everyday use of their mother tongue. My concern goes to students of linguistics interested in African languages and more precisely Narrow Bantu languages and who would like to see how phonological processes they have been discussing in other languages also operate in Mokpe. My concern goes to the authors who have attempted to provide an alphabet and orthographic rules to read and write Mokpe. May this contribution and my position regarding the alphabet be an inspiration to solve the problem of harmonization of the alphabets, considering the fact that the many alphabets

will not ease the reading and learning process. It is necessary to adopt one writing system once for good even if the latter will undergo adjustment as time passes. My concern finally goes to all the Bakweri people who are “struggling” to have their language and culture known by the children and the general public.

Second, my passion for descriptive linguistics as an essential component of Documentary Linguistics, and the assurance to know more about the “mystery” an under-described language is hiding from general linguistic knowledge was a determinant factor in this enterprise.

Third, the possibility of furnishing teaching material to university courses on the structure of the African languages as a means to know more about the individual languages of the world linguistic patrimony.

Fourth, the accomplishment of a duty as researcher and university lecturer whose mission cannot be dissociated from the one of the University he is working for, that is the provision of service to the community.

The book is divided in three main sections: phonology, morphology and syntax. In the section on the phonology, I presented the sound system of the language, the various current phonological processes, the tone system and an alphabet. The morphology is divided into two parts, the noun morphology and the verb morphology. Then the book ended with the simple and complex sentence structures, syntax. One particularity on this book is that it provides extensive examples on each phenomenon described. The examples are carefully selected to be representative of the phenomenon described on various criteria including:

- 1) The shape/structure of the word (nouns and verbs)
- 2) The noun class of the word (nouns)
- 3) The tonal class of the word (verbs)
- 4) The tonal class/subclass and group/subgroup of the word (both nouns and verbs)
- 5) The length of the utterance
- 6) The position of the word (nouns and verbs)

In short special care was put on the selection of the illustrations.

The *A Grammatical Sketch of Mokpe* started in 2005 with data collection, and this exercise has continued till the final version of this work. By 2007, the bulk of the work was done, and only the chapter on syntax was left. In the meantime, other duties and academic commitments did not allow me to go back to the grammar, finish the last chapter and do the final readings and adjustments. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to be invited as a Research Fellow at Kyoto University in Japan, from February to May 2012. That was the time I was able to complete what I started many years ago.

Two people are at the center of this endeavor, that I will never stop thanking for their quality and decisive contribution. First, I am grateful to Mr Lynonge Paul, my “many-in-one” consultant who understood at the early stage of this work my intention and gave me all the linguistic support. His role did not only consist of kindly providing data for the book but also to explain and research on the areas or questions he could not answer immediately during our elicitation sessions. Paul, thanks for your restless collaboration, thank you for your incredible patience in answering all my questions on your language, even those for which you had no immediate answer. I will then express my profound gratitude to Prof. Shigeki Kaji of the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies (ASAFAS) of Kyoto University who made it possible for me to have the unique opportunity to stay at ASAFAS to complete this work. His utmost support throughout my stay in Kyoto and the indefectible assistance of his colleague Prof. Araki, of his collaborators Numata-san and Inai-san were valuable assets that contributed tremendously to the accomplishment of this task.

This work is a grammatical sketch and I am aware of its gaps and shortcomings. For example, I am conscient that there is still some works to do on the alphabet, the tonology and many other aspects, and these will be my next preoccupations on the language. However, in the meantime, may this contribution be seen as an important step forward in our knowledge of Mokpe and may it prove to be not only a useful continuation of works started by previous authors, but also a starting point for further research on the grammatical structures of Mokpe.

A GRAMMATICAL SKETCH OF MÒKPÈ (BAKWERI) , BANTU A20

Gratien ATINDOGBE

Department of Linguistics, University of Buea

ABSTRACT This work, *A Grammatical Sketch of Mòkpè (Bakweri)*, is a linguistic description that emphasizes data showing the basic and relevant structures of the language. It covers four aspects: phonology, orthography, morphology, and syntax. Phonology studies the sound and tone systems of a language and revealed that Mokpe has seven vowels and 23 consonants, although Connell (1997) states 21. The phonological rules noted include: deletion, epenthesis, affricate and glide formation, and vowel assimilation. Tonally, Mokpe exhibits two lexical tones (low and high) and a grammatical high tone. The two basic tones combine to form either a rising or falling tone. The most prominent tonological processes are tone deletion, tone copy, tone simplification, and Meeussen's Rule. Based on the phonological study, 26 graphemes (unigraphs only) are proposed for writing the Mokpe language. These include 18 consonants, seven vowels, and two tones. The morphological study of the nominal and verbal systems of Mokpe revealed that the language retains many intrinsic traits of Narrow Bantu. The structure of the noun is a noun class prefix followed by a root. There are 13 noun classes numbered consecutively from 1 to 10, 13 to 14 and 19. They are grouped into nine genders (singular/plural pairs), with the odd-numbered classes being singular and even-numbered classes being plural: 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, 5/4, 7/8, 9/10, 14/6, 14/10, and 19/8. Regarding the verbal morphology, the focus was on inflection and derivation. The verb denotes an action, process, or state and changes according to person, time, mood, and class in agreement with the noun class of the subject. Derivation is still very productive in Mokpe. Some verb meanings are obtained by combining the verb root with a suffix. As far as syntax is concerned, the study revealed that Mokpe is a subject-verb-object (SVO) language.

Key Words: Mokpe; Bakweri; Gammar; Bantu; Cameroon.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mokpe (Mokpwe, Bakweri) is spoken in the Southwest Region of Cameroon, largely in Fako Division, in the cities of Limbe, Muyuka and Tiko. A census of as far back as 1982 by SIL revealed that a population of 32,200 speak Mokpe (Lewis, 2009). This number is not far from what Mutia (2005: 217–218) advanced:

With a total population of just over 35,000, the Bakweri occupy about 85 villages in Fako division. The Bakweri are [...] divided into two main groups, namely *Vakpe va Lelu* (Upper Bakweri) and *Vakpe wa Mbenge* (Lower Bakweri). The Upper Bakweri are closer to the base of the Cameroon Mountain stretching from Mafanja in the West and to Ekona in the East. The Lower Bakweri inhabit the area along the Atlantic coast and

include the villages of Ewota, Kie, Bimbia, Batoke, Bakingili, Bomboko, and Sanje (in the West Coast), Bonjongo, and Mokunda.

However, considering the perfide influence exerted on the languages of the Southwest Region by the linguafranca Cameroon Pidgin English (Akum, 2011), this number might have dropped considerably. Indeed, the speakers also use Cameroon Pidgin English and/or Duala. Although the exact relationship between Mokpe, Wumboko, Bubia and Isubu, is not yet firmly established, it is alleged that literature may serve the four speech forms.⁽¹⁾ Guthrie (1967/71) classified Mokpe as a Narrow Bantu language of Zone A, precisely A22, under the Duala Group (A20).

The objective of the present work is to provide a simple descriptive grammar (a sketch grammar) of the language for teaching and learning purposes. The work is divided into three sections: phonology, morphology and syntax. The variety described here is the one spoken by the Upper Bakweri people. My field research assistant is a native of Gbassa/Bwassa (the father's village), and he grew up between Bwasa, Bova (the mother's village) and Buea, the capital city of the Southwest Region.

1. Location of Mokpe Speakers

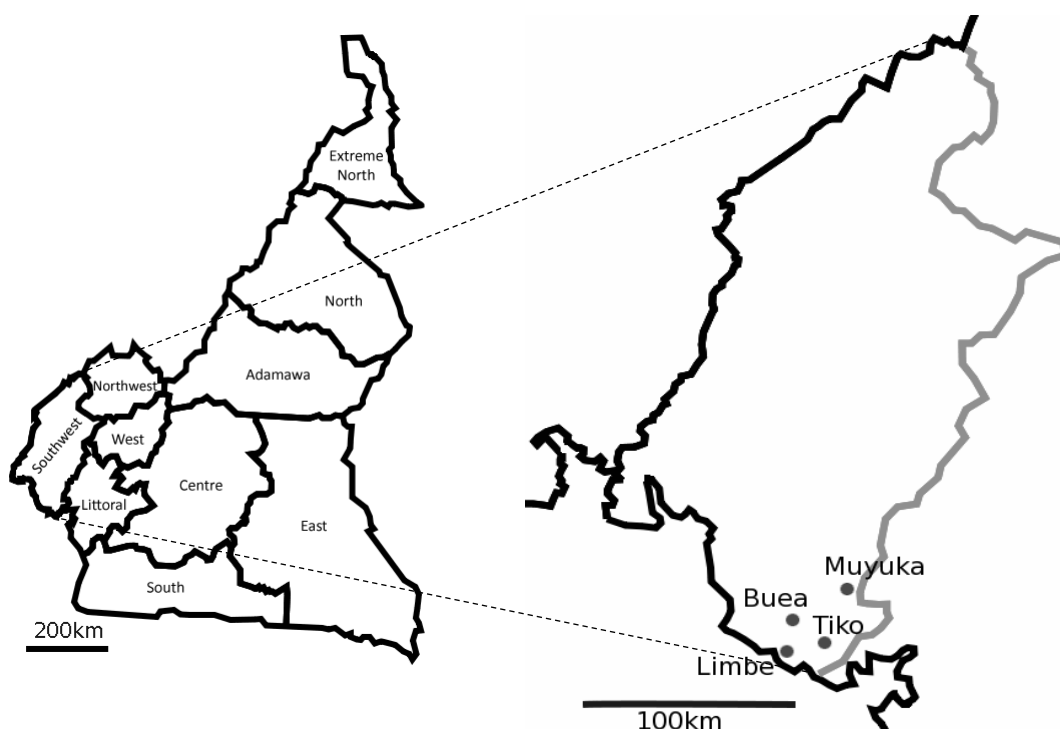


Fig. 1. Map of Cameroon (Southwest Region).

2. Mokpe and the Surrounding Languages

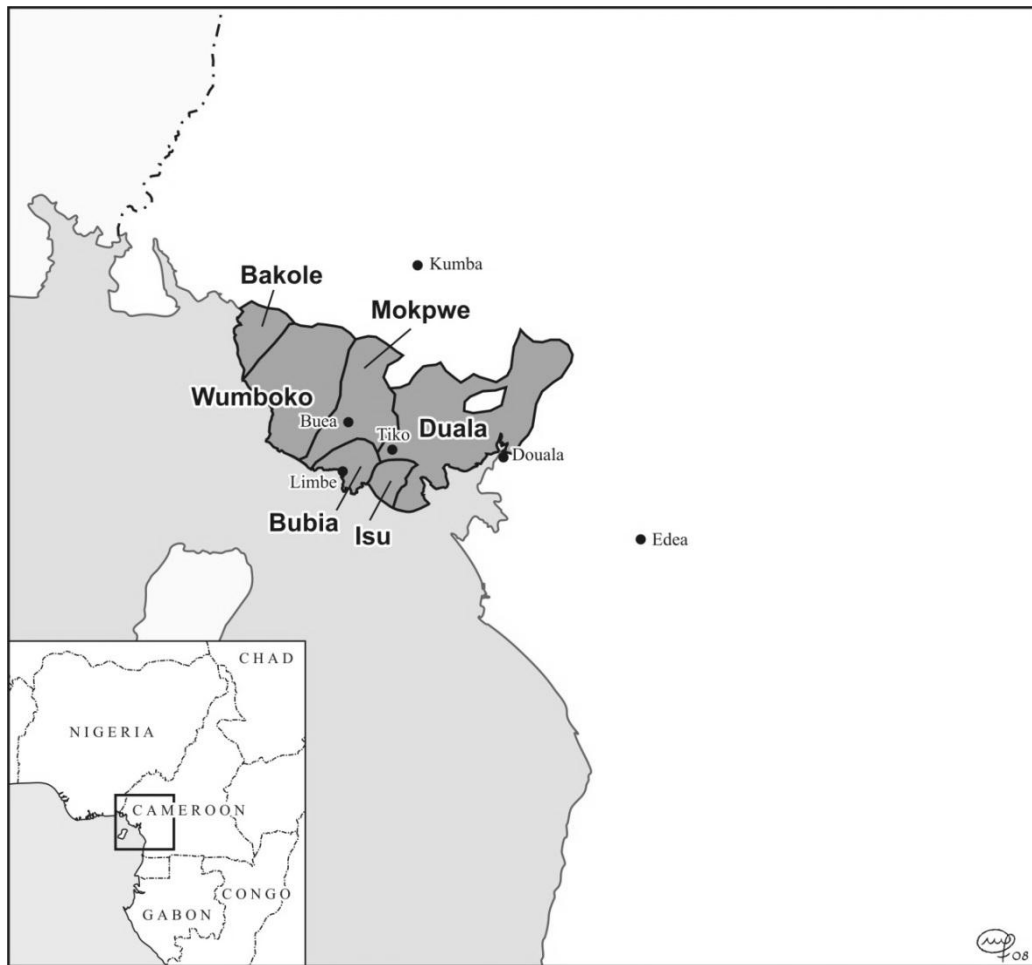


Fig. 2. Map of the Southwest Region with the languages surrounding Mokpe.

II. PHONOLOGY⁽²⁾

1. Consonants

Mokpe has the following consonant system:

		Labial		Alveolar		Post-alv/ Palatal	Velar	Labial- Velar
Nasals		m		n		ɲ		ŋm
Plosives:	plain	(p)	b	t			k	kp gb
	prenasalised		mb		nd	ndʒ	ŋg	ŋgb
Affricates						dʒ		ŋw
Fricatives		ɸ	β					
Approximants				l		j		w
Liquidified Fricative				zr				

The system above differs from what Connell (1997) presented in the brief grammatical introduction of his dictionary of the Mokpe language:

		Labial		Alveolar		Post-alv/ Palatal	Velar	Labial-Velar
Nasals		m		n		ɲ		
Plosives:	plain	(p)	b)	t	d		k	kp gb
	prenasalised		mb		nd	ndʒ	ŋg	ŋmgb
Fricatives		ɸ	β	s				
Approximants				l		j		w

It is obvious that I have six sounds (dʒ, zr, ŋm, ŋgb, ŋw, g) that do not exist in Connell's chart. On the other hand, I lack three sounds (ŋmgb, d and s), which are found in Connell (1997).

The six sounds missing in Connell's dictionary are exemplified here by the following words:

[ŋm]	ŋmándʒà	"sea"	[ŋgb]	ŋgbâ	"dog"
[dʒ]	dʒòlí	"firewood"	[ŋw]	lũŋwèlè	"to show"
[zr]	lĩzrò	"eye"	[g]	gàlé	"gari, tapioca"

As far as the /ŋmgb/ is concerned, we have not identified a single word where this sound appears in our corpus. Similarly, no word made up with this sound is found in Connell's dictionary. Note that this sound is split in two in my work: /ŋm/ and /gb/, illustrated by *ŋmánà* "child" and *gbààβá* "snake" respectively.

The sound /p/ is found only in borrowed words like *píjà* “pear,” while /b/ on the other hand is very uncommon. In our corpus, we found it in *libà* “to steal” and *bò* “selfishness” only. And, even then, it should be noted that *bò* freely varies with *wò* while *ibà* “steal!” (1st pers. imp.) can equally be said *ìwà*. Finally, /g/ is as rare as /p/, because it is only found in borrowed words: *gàlé* “gari, tapioca” (grinded and dry cassava).

It is worth recalling that the consonantal system of Mokpe creates a lot of controversy among researchers. In addition to sounds that may exist in one phonological description but not others (e.g. the divergence between my work and Connell’s own), there is the question of phonological representation of certain sounds.

For example, /s/ in Connell (1997) is phonemicized as /r/ in Kagaya (1992a). The phonetic reality that I represent in this work with the symbols /zr/ is equally found in Muzang (1997), but with three variants: [rz], [ʒr], [rʒ]. Indeed, many speakers will use [rz], [ʒr] or [rʒ]. I opted for /zr/, the liquidified alveolar fricative, because that is what my informants use. Ngoisah (2002), contrary to Muzang (1997) and me, uses /rz/. This sound is realised as /s/ in Bubia as shown in (4) below.

Mokpe	Bubia	Gloss
lǐzrò	lǐsò	"eye"
izròzré	isòsé	"crab"
lizròŋgá	lisòŋgá	"tooth"
jǎzrù	jǎsù	"chin"
èèzrè	èèsè	"bone"
mbúzrà	mbúsà	"back"
izràzrí	isàsí	"mat"
nìzrè	nìsè	"thirst"
zràlì	sàlì	"small"
lizrimá	lisimá	"cold"

On the other hand, Ngoisah (2002) and Connell (1997) consistently disagree on which of the phonemes /ɸ/ or /β/ appears where. A look at their respective data reveals that they contrast in all the words that they happen to have in common. There is no single word in which the two authors agree on the sound to appear. Consequently, I want to believe that the two authors may be investigating two separate varieties. The examples below illustrate this controversy:

Ngoisah (2002)		Connell (1997)		Gloss
IPA	Orthography	IPA	Orthography	

/ɸ/	ɸê	hwê	/β/	βê	vê	"be"
	ɸá	hwa		βá	va	"they"
	ɸè	hwè		βè	vè	"NCP, cl. 8"
	ɸéjà	hwejà		βéjà	vejà	"hear"
	káɸè	kahwè		káβè	kavè	"antelope"
	ɸàné	hwàné		βàné	vàné	"carry"
	ɸéwǎ	hwewǎ		βéwǎ	vewǎ	"two"
	gbàɸá	gbàhwa		gbàβá	gbàva	"snake"
	ɸándà	hwandà		βándà	vandà	"cover"
	liɸàtò	lihwàtò		liβàtò	livàtò	"cloth"
	nà ɸéli	nà hweli		nà βéli	nà veli	"I am"
	màlíɸá	màlíhwa		màlíβá	màlíva	"water"
	èɸámbo	èhwambo		èβámbo	èvambo	"plank"
/β/	βéjà	hveja	/ɸ/	ɸéjà	feja	"sore"
	βàálê	hvàalê		ɸàálê	fàalê	"light a fire"
	liβóá	lihvoa		liɸóá	lifoa	"to open"
	liβàβà	lihvàhvà		liɸàɸà	lifàfà	"broom"
	mòóβò	mòohvò		mòóɸò	mòofò	"head"
	èβùamá	èhvùma		èɸùamá	èfùma	"orange"

It is difficult to say that this disparity originates from a dialectal variation. One of our informants, although from the same region as Ngoisah, claimed to be surprised by the forms produced by the researcher. She perceives just the opposite sound. My main informant, for the same set of words, produced the sounds transcribed by Connell's.

2. Vowels

Mokpe has the following vowel system:

front	central	back	
i		u	closed
e		o	half-closed
ɛ		ɔ	half-open
	a		open

This system is identical to what is found in Connell (1997) and in Ngoisah (2002).

3. Tones

1. *Lexical tones*

Like most Bantu languages of the zone, Mokpe contrasts two lexical basic tones: the low (`) and the high (´). However, a downstepped high tone (ˈ), the falling (^) and the rising (ˇ) are equally noted. The falling and the rising are the results of the combination of the two basic tones. Example:

Low		High	
ɲmà	"year"	kó	"snail"
wòkpò	"beard"	ɲáŋgá	"sand"
likpàmbà	"cassava"	ímúndá	"friends"
Falling		Rising	
liβê	"breast (female)"	tũ	"room"
ɲô	"body"	limě	"to swallow"
		mǒlěŋgù	"sheep"

2. *Grammatical tones*

The language equally exhibits grammatical tones. This is illustrated in the paired phrases in (8), where the indefinite and definite articles are rendered by the low and the high tone respectively.

mòtò / bàtò	cl. 1/2	"a man / people"
mótò / bátò		"the man / the people"
mòóβò / mèóβò	cl. 3/4	"a head / heads"
mó'óβò / mé'óβò		"the head / the heads"
lizròŋgá / màzròŋgá	cl. 5/6	"a tooth / teeth"
lǐzròŋgá / mǎzròŋgá		"the tooth / the teeth"
lǐzrò / mǐzrò	cl. 5/6	"an eye / eyes"
lí'í zrò / mí'í zrò		"the eye / the eyes"
èlèlà / βèlèlà	cl. 7/8	"a duck / ducks"
élèlà / βélèlà		"the duck / the ducks"
ìwónì / βèwónì	cl. 19/13	"a cartridge / cartridges"
îwónì / βêwónì		"the cartridge / the cartridges"
wòzrô	cl. 14	"a face"
wôzrô		"the face"

Grammatical tones are also very productive in the verbal paradigm where it is used to distinguish between the past simple and the present perfect tenses. That is:

lǐjòó “to laugh”

Past simple

nà mà jǒ	"I laughed"
ò mà jǒ	"you laughed"
à mà jǒ	"s/he laughed"
ì mà jǒ	"we laughed"
è mà jǒ	"you laughed"
βá mà jǒ	"they laughed"

Present Perfect

ná mǎ jò	"I have laughed"
ó mǎ jò	"you have laughed"
á mǎ jò	"s/he has laughed"
í mǎ jò	"we have laughed"
é mǎ jò	"you have laughed"
βá mǎ jò	"they have laughed"

lǐdʒáá “to come”

Past simple

nà mà dʒǎ	"I came"
ò mà dʒǎ	"you came"
à mà dʒǎ	"s/he came"
ì mà dʒǎ	"we came"
è mà dʒǎ	"you came"
βá mà dʒǎ	"they came"

Present Perfect

ná mǎ dʒà	"I have come"
ó mǎ dʒà	"you have come"
á mǎ dʒà	"s/he has come"
í mǎ dʒà	"we have come"
é mǎ dʒà	"you have come"
βá mǎ dʒà	"they have come"

lěmbà (> li + émbà) “to sing”

Past simple

nà měmbá	"I sang"
ò měmbá	"you sang"
à měmbá	"s/he sang"
ì měmbá	"we sang"
è měmbá	"you sang"
βá měmbá	"they sang"

Present Perfect

nǎ měmbà	"I have sung"
ǒ měmbà	"you have sung"
á měmbà	"s/he has sung"
í měmbà	"we have sung"
é měmbà	"you have sung"
βá měmbà	"they have sung"

NB: měmbá > mà+émbà

NB: měmbà (> mà+ émbà)

lǐkê "to cut"

Past simple

nà mà ké	"I cut"
ò mà ké	"you cut"
à mà ké	"s/he cut"
ì mà ké	"we cut"
è mà ké	"you cut"

Present Perfect

ná 'máá kê	"I have cut"
ó 'máá kê	"you have cut"
á 'máá kê	"s/he has cut"
í 'máá kê	"we have cut"
é 'máá kê	"you have cut"

4. Realization of Segments

mw-	mw-àngá	"root"	>	mù-	+	-àngá
				cl.1		Root

mw-	mw-íbè	"thief"	>	mù-	+	-íbè
				cl.1		Root
lw-	lw-àtù	"cloth"	>	l-	+	-ùàtù
				cl.5		Root

➤ Palatalisation

biphonematic

lj-	lj-ámà	"jaw"	>	lì-	+	-ámà
				cl.5		Root
lj-	lj-òḃá	"door"	>	lì-	+	-òḃá
				cl.5		Root

2. Vowels

	Mokpe		English		French
/i/	itámí	"shoe"	fit	lit	"bed"
/u/	lèlùwà	"market"	pull	cou	"neck"
/e/	ètò	"rat"	face [fers]	thé	"tea"
/o/	mòláló	"uncle"	note [noot]	numéro	"number"
/ɛ/	ɲmēmè	"bat"	bet	père	"father"
/ɔ/	ndʒóló	"lizard"	boy	or	"gold"
/a/	màámà	"jaws"	adult	taper	"to tap"

5. Syllable Structure

Mokpe has two syllabic shapes: CV and V. The most common shape is CV. The CV is sometimes realised, C_{glide}V (i.e. CwV and CjV). In other words, the high vowels of the prefix (*i* and *u* in *lì-* and *mù-* for example) desyllabify when followed by another vowel.

CV		C _{glide} V		V	
mò	"arm"	ljò-ḃá	"door"	à	"s/he, it"
ɲgà-ndà	"nail"	ljǒ-ɲgó-ɲgó	"knee"	è-tò	"rat"
mà-zrò-ɲgá	"teeth"	mwà-ɲgá	"root"		
lì-ká-kù-mè-nè	"to stick"				

6. Phonological Rules

1. Deletion rules

Deletion, i.e. instances where a sound gets eliminated from the string of set of words appears to be the most salient segmental rule in Mokpe. This happens to both vowels and consonants. The cases reported here are of two types: deletions that are triggered by the environment, and deletions that are motivated by rapid flux of the speech. The deleted item is bolded.

➤ Deletions that are triggered by the environment

The first of two vowels following each other across morpheme or word boundary will get deleted if this first vowel is preceded by a coda.

Example 1

Deletion of vowel /i/ of the infinitive marker (IM) and of vowel /a/ of the subject pronoun 1st person (1sg):

a.	IM	Root		Infinitive	
	li-	+ émbà	→	lěmbà	"to sing"
	li-	+ òká	→	lòká	"to play"
	li-	+ úmbà	→	lǔmbà	"to close"
	li-	+ èndé	→	lèndé	"to go"
	li-	+ àgbá	→	làgbá	"to climb"
b.	1sg	Root		Present	
	nà	+ émbà	→	němbà	"I sing"
	nà	+ òká	→	nòká	"I play"
	nà	+ úmbà	→	nǔmbà	"I close"
	nà	+ èndé	→	nèndé	"I go"
	nà	+ àgbá	→	nàgbá	"to climb"

However, be careful! Do not be chocked to read or hear two distinct consecutive vowels, the subject pronoun 3rd person (3sg) and the vowel of the verb root:

3sg	Root		Present	
à	+ émbà	→	à émbà	"s/he sings"
à	+ òká	→	à òkà	"s/he plays"
à	+ úmbà	→	à úmbà	"s/he closes"
à	+ èndé	→	à èndè	"s/he goes"

à + àgbá → à àgbà "s/he climbs"

Indeed, there is no deletion in the instances above. Remember that deletion occurs if and only if the vowel that gets deleted is preceded by a consonant.

Example 2.

In the following nouns, the vowel of the noun class prefix /mò-/ (singular) or /wù-/ (plural) will delete in front of another vowel.

NC		Root		Output	
mò-	+	ólánà	→	mólánà	"woman"
mò-	+	únánà	→	múnánà	"man"
wù-	+	únánà	→	wúnánà	"men"

➤ Deletions that are motivated by the flux of the speech

a) The first of two vowels following each other across morpheme or word boundary will get deleted in rapid speech.

Slow speech		Rapid speech	
jòkpó á mbóli	→	jòkpá mbóli	"he-goat"
ṇàmà í ßǎ	→	ṇámí ßǎ	"two animals"
kémà í jáò	→	kémí jáò	"three monkeys"
Ìwàná é má ètǔ	→	ìwàná é mètǔ	"the mouth which is small"

b) Intervocalic /β/, /l/ or /j/ will get deleted in rapid speech.

Slow speech		Rapid speech	
βèòkpó βé mbóli	→	βèòkpó é mbóli	"he-goats"
βáǎná βámi	→	βáǎná ámi	"my children"
lízrò lǐ zrǎli	→	lízrò ì zrǎli	"the small eye"
èlèlǎ jǎmi	→	èlèlǎ ámi	"my duck"

c) Whole syllables get deleted in rapid speech.

Slow speech		Rapid speech	
ònô ṇmǎná wà múnánà	→	ònô ṇmǎná múnánà	"this boy (near me)"
mǐzrò mémá méně	→	mǐzrò méně	"the eyes which see"
èṇgbá é má èlómǎ	→	èṇgbá èlómǎ	"the dog which barks"
à βéli ndí mòtà wòòwê	→	à βéli mòtà wòòwê	"he is a bad person"
ébù má é βéli ndí jé'tí	→	ébù mééli jé'tí	"the fruit is strong"

2. Epenthetic rules

When certain suffixes of the verbal derivational morphology are added to the verb root, an epenthetic consonant, the liquid /l/ or the nasal /n/ is inserted between the final vowel and the suffix. That is that case of the relationship morpheme -ελε.

/lũ̀mà + ελε/ → [lũ̀mèlèlè] "to come from (somewhere)"

to come +RELAT

/lizràè̀nè + ελε/ → [lizràè̀nèlèlè] "sign (sth for sb)"

to sign +RELAT

/liφiá + ελε/ → [liφiánélé] "to mix sth with sth"

to mix +RELAT

/lirzàngá + ελε/ → [lirzàngánélé] "to bring together (people)"

to assemble +RELAT

In some other utterances, the glides /w/ and /j/ are inserted to break a sequence of two vowels.

èmú́nà à ò báǎ è̀ngòndà ámi → è̀mú́nà à wò báǎ è̀ngòndà ámi

"the man who will marry my daughter"

nà mà ɔ̀'̀ngówáné mbítí → nà mà wɔ̀'̀ngówáné mbítí

"I helped myself"

à ɔ̀'̀hwé (ìpó) wítí → à wɔ̀'̀hwé (ìpó) wítí

"kill yourselves"

3. Feature changing rules

➤ Affricate and Glide formation

The concord vowels /i/ and /e/, change respectively to [dʒ] and [j] before another vowel.

• /i/ → [dʒ]

ìlìβòànè ì òkó → ìlìβòànè dʒòkó "one key"

ìnòní í ókó → ìnòní 'dʒókó "one bird"

ì òβì múpánà → dʒòβì múpánà "we have a man"

ì àzréjé likê → dʒààzréjé likê "we wanted to cut"

íwǒ̀nì é́má í óṅwǎ → íwǒ̀nì é́má dʒóṅwǎ

"the cartridge which kills"

wóǒ̀lò wémá wó ì òṅgówání → wóǒ̀lò wémá wó dʒòṅgówání

"the canoe which helps us"

• /e/ → [j]

ìzrù è òkó	→	ìzrù jòkó	"one wall"
èjémbé é ókó	→	èjémbé 'jókó	"one animal"
è òḃì màlíwá	→	jòḃì màlíwá	"you (pl) have water"
è àzréjé likê	→	jààzréjé likê	"you (pl) wanted to cut"

➤ Vowel assimilation

The vowel /a/ of the collective action suffix -na is realised /ɔ/ if the final vowel of the verb root is /ɔ/ and as [ɛ] if the final vowel of the root is /ɛ/.

/liŋwâ + na/	→	[liŋwânâ]	"to die with ..."
/làgbá + na/	→	[làgbáná]	"to climb with..."
/linàŋgá + na/	→	[linàŋgáná]	"to sleep with..."
/liŋô + na/	→	[liŋônò]	"to drink with..."
/liǰónó + na/	→	[liǰónó]	"to laugh with..."
/likúlè + na/	→	[likúlènè]	"to finish with..."
/lèndéné + na/	→	[lèndéné]	"to go with..."

7. Tonal Rules

We have noted tone deletion, tone simplification and tone lowering, precisely, Meeussen's Rule.

1. Tone deletion

In some cases, when a vowel gets deleted, its tone does not survive but also get deleted. For examples of such cases, please turn back to all the instances of vowel deletion discussed above in (17, 18, 20). You will notice that each time a vowel is deleted, it goes with its tone. Let us however recall the examples for sake of convenience.

NC		Root		Output	
mò-	+	ólánà	→	mólánà	"woman"
mò-	+	úpánà	→	múpánà	"man"
wù-	+	úpánà	→	wúpánà	"men"

In these examples indeed, the vowel of the prefix erases with its tone and the noun surfaces with the high tone of the first vowel of the root only. Note that we had a low tone facing a high before deletion occurs.

2. Tone copy

The vowel /a/ of the collective action suffix -na copies the tone the final vowel of the root.

/liŋwâ + na/	→	[liŋwânà]	"to die with ..."
/làgbá + na/	→	[làgbáná]	"to climb with ..."
/liŋô + na/	→	[liŋônò]	"to drink with ..."
/liǰónó + na/	→	[liǰónó]	"to laugh with ..."
/linàngá + na/	→	[linàngáná]	"to sleep with ..."
/likúlè + na/	→	[likúlènè]	"to finish with ..."
/lèndéné + na/	→	[lèndéné]	"to go with ..."

Similarly, the causative, applicative and the process are all marked by the toneless suffixes -izɛ, -eja and -ɛa respectively. These morphemes replace the last vowel of the verb root and copy its tone.

/lőkòwà + izɛ/ to learn +CAUS	→	[lőkòwizɛ]	"to teach (cause sb to learn)"
/làndá + izɛ/ to buy +CAUS	→	[làndízɛ]	"to cause sb to buy"
/liŋwâ + eja/ to learn +APPL	→	[liŋwéejà]	"die for ..."
/lòŋgá + eja/ to grow +APPL	→	[lòŋgéjà]	"to look after" (a child)
/lèndé + ɛa/ to go +PROC	→	[lèndéá]	"to go to"
/liφàngà + ɛa/ to spoil +PROC	→	[liφàngèà]	"to become spoiled"

3. Tone simplification

In some other cases, more precisely when it is the vowel of a root which is deleted, the tone will survive and re-associate with the vowel of the prefix. This creates a contour tone which is simplified.

NC + Root	Vowel del.	Tone reass.	Tone Simpl.	Output	
βà- + ólànà	βà- + ' lánà	βálànà	βálànà	βálànà	'women'

4. Meeussen's Rule (H-tone lowering)

In Bantu languages, there is a tonal process whereby the second of two successive high tones is systematically deleted or lowered. We must have noticed when we were briefly discussing the grammatical tones of the Mokpe language that two consecutive high tones result in the lowering of the second in the present perfect tense. In the example below, the tones on the subject pronoun are low except for the last subject pronoun "they" whose tone is high. The tone on the past marker (mà) equally surfaces with a low tone. Then there is no tone lowering. In the present perfect, on the contrary, the tense marker is high-toned (má) and it is lowered because it immediately follows high-toned subject pronouns.

lɪŋgbǎ "to give"

Past simple

Present Perfect

nà mà ŋgbǎ	"I gave"	ná 'máá ŋgbǎ	"I have given "
ò mà ŋgbǎ	"you gave"	ó 'máá ŋgbǎ	"you have given "
à mà ŋgbǎ	"s/he gave"	á 'máá ŋgbǎ	"s/he has given "
ì mà ŋgbǎ	"we gave"	í 'máá ŋgbǎ	"we have given "
è mà ŋgbǎ	"you gave"	é 'máá ŋgbǎ	"you have given"
ǎà mà ŋgbǎ	"they gave"	ǎá 'máá ŋgbǎ	"they have given"

The phrases in column A below do not exhibit any lowering because the high tone of the noun root is preceded by a low tone on the noun class prefix (mò-, ŋm-) or by zero noun class and then zero tone). Lowering happens when the tone of the prefix turn to be high.

A (no H lowering)

B (H lowering, Meeussen's Rule)

mòóβò mòndénè	"a big head"	mó'óβò mááẏrê	"the whole head"
ŋmēmà mòzràlì	"a small heart"	mé'émà mòndénè	"the big hearts"
ŋgbázrèlì ndénè	"a big cartridge"	í'ŋgbázrèlì ndénè	"big cartridges"

Furthermore, we have cases of word boundary. When the last vowel of the first lexeme of the phrase is low-toned, there is no lowering of the following high-toned vowel. But in B such lowering occurs because there are two successive high tones.

A (no H lowering)

B (H lowering, Meeussen's Rule)

kémà βókó	"one monkey"	ndzìjá 'βókó	"one road (path)"
lìzrò lókó	"one eye"	èwòlò 'lókó	"one work"
lìnà lókó	"one name"	lìzròŋgá 'lókó	"one tooth"
wòzrô wókó	"one face"	wòŋgó 'wókó	"one brain"
ìlìβòànè dzókó	"one key"	ìnòní 'dzókó	"one bird"

ìzrù jòkó	"one wall"	èjémbé 'jókó	"one animal"
tòímá jòmà	"each thing"	tòímá 'dʒóŋgó	"each pot"
tòímá mǒβò	"each head"	tòímá 'múnánà	"each husband"
tòímá mòtò	"each person"	tòímá 'zráŋgó	"each father"
tòímá ɲàŋgó	"each mother"	tòímá 'lítô	"each ear"
tòímá ŋgbâ	"each duck"	tòímá 'línà	"each name"
tòímá ŋmâ	"each year"	tòímá 'ŋmánà	"each baby"

Finally in the examples below, the tonal structure of the wh-question is just the structural description of Meeussen's Rule.

H lowering, Meeussen's Rule

ó 'nú wélélê	"where are you from?"
ó 'né mbèzrà	"where is the boy?"
ó 'né lèlà	"where is the duck?"
ó 'né kémà	"where is the monkey?"
í 'má βóndó dʒá	"when do you come?"
í 'má βóndó dʒá βê	"when do you come again?"

8. The Alphabet

Following the some of the principles outlined in the *General Alphabet of Cameroonian Languages* (Tadadjeu et Sadembouo 1979), I propose 26 graphemes (unigraphs) to write the Mokpe language. There are 18 consonants, 7 vowels and 2 tones.

Consonants

p, b, t, k, g, ɸ, β, l, w, j, ʒ, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, d, r, z.

Vowels

i, u, e, ε, o, ɔ, a.

Tones

` (low) ´ (high)

1. Consonants: illustration

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		Initial position	Mediane position
/p/	p	píjà	"pear"	——	
/b/	b	bò	"selfishness"	lǐbà	"to steal"
/t/	t	tàmbá	"hat/cap"	lītô	"ear"
/k/	k	kó	"snail"	likòkó	"to pound"
/g/	g	gàlé	"garri"	——	
/ɸ/	ɸ	ɸéjá	"wound"	káɸè	"antelope"
/β/	β	βétá	"five"	lǐβélè	"to call"
/l/	l	liwèndì	"knife"	èwùlé	"grass"
/j/	j	jütütù	"smoke"	lǐβijà	"to know"
/w/	w	wúɸá	"day"	liwówà	"to take"
/m/	m	mǒmè	"male"	kémà	"sing"
/n/	n	nà	"and"	mànònó	"fat"
/ɲ/	ɲ	ɲìɲì	"housefly"	mòòɲè	"ground"

Some of the graphemes will be used to write some single sounds.

Phoneme	Grapheme		Examples			
			Initial position		Mediane position	
/dʒ/	dʒ	(d + ʒ)	dʒùɲgó	"eagle"	βààdʒèdʒè	"mothers"
/kp/	kp	(k + p)	kpâ	"fall!"	wòkpò	"beard"
/gb/	gb	(g + b)	gbààβá	"snake"	ìgbê	"sun"

The single graphemes can also be utilized to write co-articulated sounds like [zr], [mb], [nd], [ndʒ], [ɲg], [ɲgb], [ɲm], [ɲw].

Phoneme	Grapheme		Examples			
			Initial position		Mediane position	
/zr/	zr	z + r	zràlì	"small"	ìzròzré	"crab"
/mb/	mb	m + b	mbówà	"village"	zrómbé	"star"
/nd/	nd	n + d	ndòndòkì	"needle"	mbòndò	"buttocks"
/ndʒ/	ndʒ	n + d + ʒ	ndʒàwù	"hunger"	ìlándʒò	"fruit"
/ɲg/	ɲg	ɲ + g	ɲgàtá	"basket"	ɲgàɲgà	"doctor"
/ɲgb/	ɲgb	ɲ + g + b	ɲgbázrèlì	"cartridges"	làɲgbá	"to shoot"
/ɲm/	ɲm	ɲ + m	ɲmǎmè	"bat"	lǒɲwà	"to kill"
/ɲw/	ɲw	ɲ + w	——	——	lǔɲwèlè	"to show"

In other words, the unigraphs will combine to form digraphs and trigraphs. That is the reason why graphemes such as *ɲ*, *d*, *r*, *z*, *ʒ*, which do not exist as single sound/phoneme in the language are included in the alphabet. I call them *auxiliary symbols*,⁽³⁾ because they help in the orthographic transcription of /nd/, /ɲg/, /dʒ/ and /zr/. Although the digraphs or trigraphs are made of 2 or 3 letters, they represent a unique phoneme, /mb/, /nd/, /ndʒ/, /ɲgb/, /ɲw/ etc.

2. Vowels: illustration

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		
		Initial position	Mediane position	Final position
/i/	i	ìndókó "pepper"	dʒítítí "darkness"	mbèḅèni "wind"
/u/	u	úɲwélê "show!"	ìwùɲgá "stomach"	mǎlèɲgù "sheep"
/e/	e	èlùwà "market"	èlèlà "duck"	èèjé "tree"
/o/	o	óɲwâ "kill!"	mèòndó "tails"	ɲmèó "egg"
/ɛ/	ɛ	èkè "metal"	dʒěmè "tongue"	"èmùnè "wave"
/ɔ/	ɔ	ò "you (sg.) "	màòɲgó "spear"	ɲgòndó "groundnut"
/a/	a	à "s/he"	ɲgàndó "crocodile"	lìkpà "bag"

3. Tones: illustration

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		
		Initial position	Mediane position	Final position
/ ` /	`	èkòwò "skin"	mòkòyò "bachelor"	mòzràɲgò "peace"
/ ' /	'	zrélè "burn"	múnyanà "husband"	ndʒèmbú "paralysis"

Like the consonants, the tones will combine to write the two contour tones, rising and falling.

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		
		Initial position	Mediane position	Final position
	´ + `	ôzré	_____	òṅgâ
		"under"		"live, grow"
	` + ´	lĩzròṅgò	ḃáǎnà	ṅmǎ
		"to hunt"	"the children"	"hoe"

4. Summary: the alphabet proper

The Mokpe alphabet is therefore made up of the following symbols:

Unigraphs

A	a	À	à	"he, she"
Ḃ	ḃ	Ḃétâ	ḃétâ	"five" dʒ
D	D ⁽⁴⁾	_____	_____	_____
E	e	Èlùwà	èlùwà	"market"
Ɛ	ɛ	Èkè	èkè	"metal"
ϕ	ϕ	Ḃéjá	ḃéjá	"wound"
G	g ⁽⁵⁾	Gàlé	gàlé	"garri"
I	i	Ìndókó	ìndókó	"pepper"
Ʒ	ʒ	_____	_____	_____
K	k	Kó	kó	"snail"
L	l	Liwèndì	liwèndì	"knife"
M	m	Mǒmè	mǒmè	"male"
N	n	Nà	nà	"and"
Ɲ	ɲ	Ɲìɲì	ɲìɲì	"housefly"
Ɲ	Ɲ ⁽⁶⁾	Ɲgàtá	ɲgàtá	"basket"
O	o	Óṅwâ	óṅwâ	"kill!"
Ɔ	ɔ	Ò	ò	"you (sg.)" ⁽⁷⁾
P	p	Píjà	píjà	"pear"
R	r	_____	_____	_____
T	t	Tàmbá	tàmbá	"hat/cap"
U	u	Úṅwélê	úṅwélê	"show!"
W	w	Wúḃá	wúḃá	"day"
J	j	Jǔtùtù	jǔtùtù	"smoke"
Z	z	Zràlì	zràlì	"small"
`	`	_____	_____	_____
´	´	_____	_____	_____

5. Rules of orthography

The first orthographic rule states that some of the consonant graphemes above combine to form digraphs. These are:

k p → kp

g b → gb

z r → zr

m b → mb

n d → nd

n d ʒ → ndʒ

ŋ g → ŋg

ŋ m → ŋm

ŋ w → ŋw

ŋ g b → ŋgb

These combinations produce the following digraphs:

Digraphs

Zr	zr	Zràlì	zràlì	"small"
Mb	mb	Mbówà	mbówà	"village"
Nd	nd	Ndòndòkì	ndòndòkì	"needle"
Ndʒ	ndʒ	Ndʒàwù	ndʒàwù	"hunger"
Ŋg	ŋg	Ŋgàtá	ŋgàtá	"basket"
Ŋgb	ŋgb	Ŋgbáʒrèlì	ŋgbáʒrèlì	"cartridges"
Ŋm	ŋm	Ŋměmè	ŋměmè	"bat"
Ŋw	ŋw	Ŋwéejà	ŋwéejà	"die for something"

Note that all tones are marked.

Ndòndòkì	ndòndòkì	"needle"
Tàmbá	tàmbá	"hat/cap"
wúná	wúná	"day"

Wǔβà	wǔβà	"chicken"
Lìβà	lìβà	"marriage; wedding"
Ljǒŋgóŋgó	ljǒŋgóŋgó	"knee"
Úŋwélê	úŋwélê	"show!"

The marking of all tones allows the visualizations of Meeussen's rule.

ná 'máá ŋgbà	→	"I have given"
mó'óβò máázrê	→	"the whole head"
tòímá 'línà	→	"each name"
èjémbé 'jókó	→	"one animal"
ó 'né mbèzrà	→	"where is the boy?"

6. The Mokpe alphabets

For comparative reasons, I present below the five alphabets that have been proposed for the Mokpe language. My alphabet, although the shortest, can equally be used to write the language efficiently.

Table 1. The various alphabets designed for the Mokpe language

No.	Connell (1997)	Blay	Ekobena (2004)	Ngoisah (2002)	Atindogbé (the present work)
	a	a	a	a	a
	b	(b)	ch	(b)	b
	d	c	e	ch	β
	e	e	ε	e	d
	ε	gb	f	ε	e
	f	hf	gb	gb	ε
	g	hw	i	hv (β)	ϕ
	gb	hz	j (dʒ)	hw (ϕ)	g
	i	i	k	i	i
	j	j (dʒ)	kp	j (dʒ)	dʒ
	k	k	l	k	k
	kp	kp	m	kp	l
	l	l	mgb	l	m
	m	m	mb	m	n
	mb	mb	n	mb	ɲ
	n	n	nw	n	ŋ
	nd	nd	nd	nd	o

ng	nj (ndʒ)	nj (ndʒ)	nj (ndʒ)	ɔ
nj (ndʒ)	ny (ɲ)	ny (ɲ)	ny (ɲ)	p
ny (ɲ)	ŋg	o	ŋg	r
o	ŋgb	ɔ	ŋgb	t
ɔ	o	s (zr)	ŋm	u
p	ɔ	t	ŋw	w
s (zr)	(p)	u	o	j
t	t	v	ɔ	z
u	u	w	rz	,
v	w	y	t	,
w	y	,	u	
y	,		w	
,			y	
			,	

III. MORPHOLOGY: THE NOUN AND THE NOUN PHRASE

Generally, most parts of speech in Mokpe, as in most Bantu languages, are generally made up of a prefix and a root:

Prefix + Root

Some roots may lack a prefix. This may just be the result of some phonological process whereby the prefix gets deleted. We therefore have:

Root

1. Nouns

The noun has the following structure:

Noun Class Prefix + Root

There are 12 prefixes, arranged in classes numbered from 1 to 19 (without 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 18), and grouped in 9 pairs as we shall see below following the singular/plural tandem. The prefixes bearing uneven numbers mark the singular, whereas those with the even numbers express plurality. The passage from singular to plural is done through the substitution of the singular prefix by the plural prefix.

The examples below show all the 12 classes of nouns, organised in pairs (sg/pl). The prefix is separated from the root by a hyphen. When there is no overt prefix, the root is preceded by nothing. When the prefix exhibits a variant, it is clearly spelled out through sub-classes labelled with letter b), c), etc.

1. *Nouns of class 1 and class 2*

class 1			class 2		
a)	mò-tò	"person"	b)	βà-tò	"persons"
	mò-mbákí	"elder"		βà-mbákí	"elders"
	mò-kòmí	"slave"		βà-kòmí	"slaves"
c)	ηm-ánà	"child"	d)	β-ánà	"children"
	ηm-èní	"guest"		βà-èní	"guests"
e)	mw-íbè	"thief"	f)	βà-íbè	"thieves"
	mw-imbà	"witch"		βà-imbà	"witches"
g)	m-ólánà	"woman"	h)	β-álánà	"women"
	m-òzròṅgòzròṅgò	"hunter"		βà-zròṅgòzròṅgò	"hunters"
	m-úpánà	"man"		w-úpánà	"men"

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- ~ ηm- ~ mw- ~ m-	βà- ~ β- ~ w-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- before consonants	βà- before consonants and vowels
ηm- before vowels a and ε	ε and i
mw- before vowel i	β- before vowel a
m- before vowels o, ɔ and u	w- before vowel u

Basic prefixes for classes 1 and 2

Singular prefix (Class 1):	Plural prefix (Class 2):
mò-	βà-

2. *Nouns of class 3 and class 4*

class 3			class 4		
a)	mò-òndó	"tail"	b)	mè-òndó	"tails"
	mò-ómè	"male"		mè-ómè	"males"
	mò-zréwá	"horn"		mè-zréwá	"horns"

	mò-láló	"mother's brother"		mè-láló	"mother's brothers"
	mò-zrô	"river"		mè-zrô	"rivers"
c)	mò-òlí	"rope"	d)	mè-òlí	"ropes"
	mò-òpè	"ground"		mè-òpè	"grounds"
	mò-zròkò	"song"		mè-zròkò	"songs"
	mò-ólèngù	"sheep"		mè-élèngù	"sheep"
e)	ɲm-â	"year"	f)	mé-â	"years"
	ɲm-ă	"hoe"		mè-á	"hoes"
	ɲm-ěmè	"bat"		mè-émè	"bats"
	ɲm-ándzà	"sea"		mè-ándzà	"seas"
			g)	mì-í zrò	"eyes"
				mì-ínà	"names"
				mì-jà	"palm trees"
				mì-jò	"stoves"

Note: the singular forms of the words in (g) are found in class 5.

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- ~ mò- ~ ɲm-	mè- ~ mè- ~ mì-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- before consonants and any root starting with vowel o	mè- before consonants and any root starting with vowel o
mò- before any root whose first vowel is ɔ	mè- before any root whose first vowel is ɔ, ε or a
ɲm- before vowels a and ε	mì- before any root whose first vowel is ɪ- and semivowel j

Basic prefixes for classes 3 and 4

Singular prefix (Class 3):	Plural prefix (Class 4):
mò-	mè-

3. Nouns of class 5 and class 6

	class 5		class 6		
a)	lì-tô	"ear"	b)	mà-tô	"ears"
	lì-já	"hand"		mà-á	"hands"

	lì-wò	"neck"		mà-wò	"necks"
	lì-wèndì	"knife"		mà-wèndì	"knives"
	lì-zròngá	"tooth"		mà-zròngá	"teeth"
	lì-βùmbú	"hair"		mà-βùmbú	"hairs"
c)	lj-ǎmà	"jaw"	d)	mà-ámà	"jaws"
	lj-ǎngógó	"knee"		mà-ǎngógó	"knees"
	lj-òβá	"door"		mà-òβá	"doors"
e)	l-ùùngá	"belly"	f)	mà-ùngá	"bellies"
	l-ùwàtù	"cloth"		mà-àtù	"cloths"
	l-ùútù	"rubbish heap"		mà-wútù	"rubbish heap"
	l-úmbú	"nest"		mà-wúmbú	"nests"

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
lì- ~ lj- ~ l-	mà-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
lì- before consonants lj- before vowel o, ɔ or a l- before vowel u	

Basic prefixes for classes 5 and 6

Singular prefix (Class 5):	Plural prefix (Class 6):
lì-	mà-

Let us point out here that some words of class 5 take their plural in class 4. This leads to the pairing 5/4:

	class 5		class 4		
a)	lì-íẏrò	"eye"	b)	mì-íẏrò	"eyes"
	lì-ínà	"name"		mì-ínà	"names"
	lì-jà	"palm tree"		mì-jà	"palm trees"
	lì-jò	"stove"		mì-jò	"stoves"
	lì-kò	"plantain"		mè-kò	"plantains"

4. Nouns of class 7 and class 8

	class 7		class 8	
a)	è-èjà	"word"	b) βè-èjà	"words"

	è-èjé	"tree"		βè-èjé	"trees"
	è-èzré	"bone"		βè-èzré	"bones"
	è-èlélé	"dawn"		βè-èlélé	"dawns"
	è-zrù	"wall"		βè-zrù	"walls"
	è-lèlà	"duck"		βè-lèlà	"ducks"
	è-wókà	"compound"		βè-wókà	"compounds"
	è-zrózró	"thigh"		βè-zrózró	"thighs"
c)	è-èkè	"iron"	d)	βè-èkè	"irons"
e)	j-ǎlí	"leaf"	f)	βè-ǎlí	"leaves"
	j-ónó	"yam"		βè-ónó	"yams"
	j-ǎzrù	"chin"		βè-ǎzrù	"chins"
	j-òkpè	"dry season"		βè-òkpè	"dry seasons"
	j-òndò	"axe"		βè-òndò	"axes"
			g)	βj-ùṅgù	"mosquitoes"

Note: The singular of mosquitoes is dʒ-ùṅgù (class19).

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
è- ~ è- ~ j-	βè- ~ βè- ~ βj-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
è- before consonants and any root whose first vowel is e	βè- elsewhere
è- before any root whose first vowel is ε or ɔ	βè- before any root whose first vowel is ε or ɔ
j- before all vowels except ε or ɔ	βj- before any root whose first vowel is u

Basic prefixes for classes 7 and 8

Singular prefix (Class 7):	Plural prefix (Class 8):
è-	βè-

5. Nouns of class 9 and class10⁽⁸⁾

	class 9		class 10		
a)	m-búzá	"back"	b)	m-búzá	"backs"
	m-búwà	"rain"		m-búwà	"rains"

plosives (p, t, k), liquidified fricatives (zr) and approximants (w)	plosives (p, t, k), liquidified fricatives (zr) and approximants (w) í- no prediction possible, seems to be optional
--	--

Basic prefixes for classes 9 and 10

Singular prefix (Class 9):	Plural prefix (Class 10):
N	N

6. Nouns of class 14

Class 14, a singular class, surprisingly, has generally no fix or precise class as plural counterpart. These singular forms may take their plural prefix nowhere else than in that same class 14. In other words the plural forms are identical to the singular forms.

class 14		class 14 ⁽⁹⁾	
a)	wò-ndzà "freedom"	b)	
	wò-zrángí "cleanliness"		
	wò-zrúbé "bad luck"		
	wò-tání "brightness"		
	wò-líjǎ "meeting"		wò-líjǎ "meetings"
	wò-zrò "parrot"		wò-zrò "parrots"
	wò-mbá "type of tree"		wò-mbá "type of tree"
c)	w-òkpò "beard"	d)	w-òkpò "beards"
	w-òmbé "kite"		w-òmbé "kites"
	w-òlò "boat"		w-òlò "boats"
	w-ùlùlè "type of tree"		w-ùlùlè "types of tree"
e)	gb-àngó "care, caution"		
	gb-àkǎ "herd"		
	gb-èngì "tapping of palm wine"		
	gb-ìndà "duration"		

Some singular forms can take their plural prefix from class 6 or class 10. The cases of singular nouns (class 14) taking their plural in class 10 also shows evidence of instances of nouns with double prefix.

class 14		class 6	
a)	wò-zrò "face"	b)	mà-zrò "faces"
	wò-kòmbò "beard"		mà-kòmbò "beards"

	w-ũ	"night"		mà-wũ	"nights"
	w-òṅgó	"brain"		mà-òṅgó	"brains"
c)	gb-ǎṅgú	"iron wood tree"		mà-ǎṅgú	"iron wood trees"
	gb-ító	"story"		mà-jító	"stories"
	gb-ààḃá	"snake"		mà-àḃá	"snakes"
	gb-ě	"tree"		mà-é	"trees"
d)	w-ómbé	"kite"	e)	í-w-ómbé	"kites"
	w-ũḃà	"chicken"		í-w-ũḃà	"chickens"
				dʒ-ũḃà	

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
wò- ~ w- ~ gb-	wò- ~ w-
	mà-
	í-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix (wù- ~ w-):
wò- before consonants	wò- before consonants
w- before any root whose first sound is vowel u, o, or ɔ	w- before any root whose first sound is vowel u, o, or ɔ
gb- before any root whose first sound is vowel i, e, ɛ, or a	

Basic prefixes for classes 14

Singular prefix (Class 14):	Plural prefixes:
wò-	wù- (class 14)
	mà- (class 6)
	í- (class 10)

7. Nouns of class 19

class 19			class 8		
a)	ì-nòní	"bird"	b)	ḃè-nòní	"birds"
	ì-tèṅgè	"pot (water)"		ḃè-tèṅgè	"pots (water)"
c)	ì-zrázrí	"mat"	d)	ḃè-zrázrí	"mats"
	ì-támbí	"shoe"		ḃè-támbí	"shoes"
	ì-zròzré	"crab"		ḃè-zròzré	"crabs"
	ì-ndókó	"pepper"		ḃè-ndókó	"pepper"

	ì-lùkà	"bottle"		βè-lùkà	"bottles"
e)	dʒ-ùṅgù	"mosquito"	f)	βj-ùṅgù	"mosquitoes"
	dʒ-ùṅgó	"eagle"		βj-ùṅgó	"eagles"

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
ì- ~ dʒ-	βè- ~ βè- ~ βj-

Distribution of the variants:

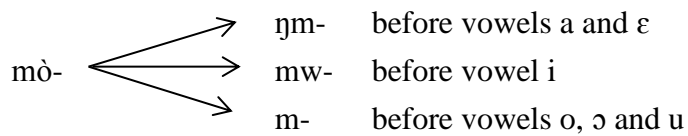
Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
ì- before consonants	βè- before any root whose first vowel is ɔ or ε
dʒ- before vowel	βè- elsewhere
	βj- before vowel u

Basic prefixes for classes 19 and 8

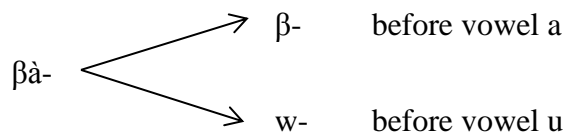
Singular prefix (Class 19):	Plural prefix (Class 8):
ì-	βè-

8. Summary of the morpho-phonological rules

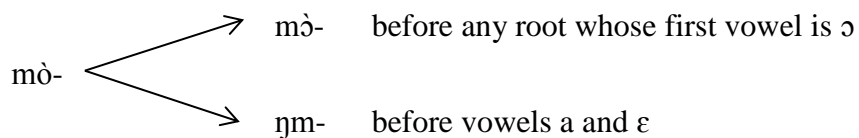
Class 1



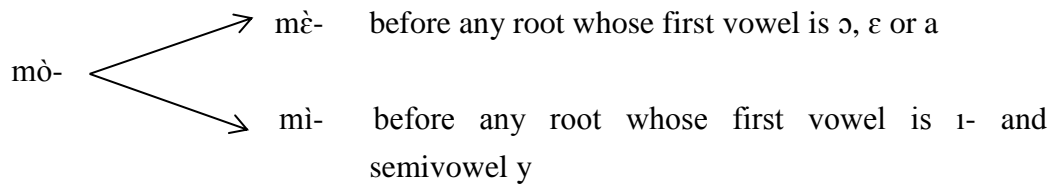
Class 2



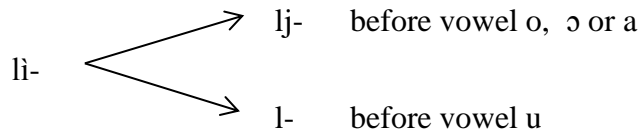
Class 3



Class 4

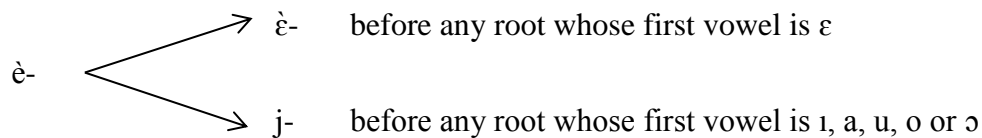


Class 5

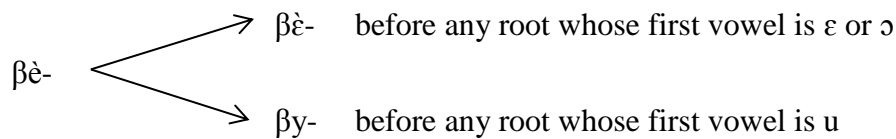


Class 6 (no rule)

Class 7



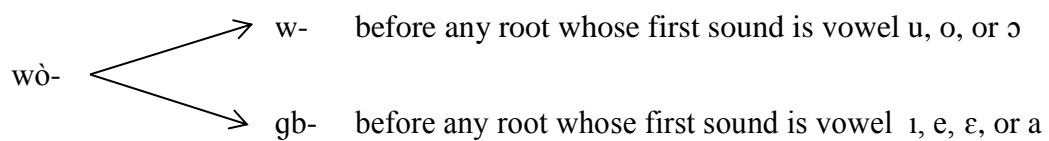
Class 8



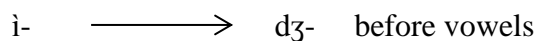
Class 9 (no rule)

Class 10 (no rule)

Class 14



Class 19



9. Summary of the paired classes

The Mokpe prefixes are therefore paired as follows:

Table 2. The pairing of Mokpe noun prefixes

Class Pairing or Genders	Prefixes: Sg/Pl
1/2	mò-/bà-
3/4	mò-/mè-
5/6	lì-/mà-
5/4	lì-/mì-
7/8	è-/bè-
9/10	N-/N- or í-
14/6	wò-/mà-
14/10	wò-/í-
19/8	ì-/bè-

10. Paired classes and meanings in Mokpe

We have identified the following meanings for the Mokpe noun class prefixes:

Table 3. Meaning of Mokpe noun class prefixes

	Scope of Meaning	Example	
Class 1/2: mò-/bà-	▪Active human beings ▪Member of ethnic group ▪Nationalities ▪Human beings of verbal derivation	mò-/bàtò mò-/bàkpè mò-/bàkálá mò-/bàzròṅgòzròṅgò	"person" "Bakweri man" "European" "hunter"
Class 3/4: mò-/mè-	▪Nature ▪Animals ▪Human related	ṁm-/mèándzà mò-/mèólèṅgù mò-/mèómè	"sea" "sheep" "male"
Class 5/6: lì-/mà-	▪Parts of body ▪Household items	lì-/màwò lì-/màwèndì	"neck" "knife"
Class 7/8: è-/bè-	▪Nature ▪Domestic birds	è-èlélé è-/bèlèlè	"dawn" "duck"
Class 9/10: è-/bè-	▪Nature ▪Non wild animals	mbúwà ṅgbà	"rain" "dog"
Class 14: wò-	▪Abstract nouns ▪Parts of body ▪Reptiles ▪Special birds	wò-ndzà wò-zrò gbà-àbá wò-zrò	"freedom" "face" "snake" "parrot"
Class 19 ì-	▪Birds ▪Nature	ì-/bèndóní y-/bèòkpè	"bird" "dry season"

11. Verbal nouns

Verbal nouns are formed by inserting a high tone on the first syllable of the infinitive form.

lǒḡwà "to kill"

l-ôḡwà l-á kíḡgè

5-DET.kill 5-Cd 9.king

"The killing of the king."

likê "to cut"

lî-kê l-á ḡàmà

5-DET.cut 5-Cd 9.meat

"The cutting of the meat."

12. Locative nouns

In Mokpe, there is no such thing like locatives or locative nouns, as it is the case in most Bantu languages, with the classes 16, 17 and 18 expressing "at/on a place", "towards a place" and "in a place". There is just one morpheme, /ó/, placed before a noun to mark all the various nuances of location.

ó mbówà		"in/to the village "
wêkí jélùwà	(èkí "place")	"at the market"
ó tǒḡgǒḡgó	(tǒḡgǒḡgó "near")	"nearby"
ôténá ndáwù	(ôténá "in", lexicalised)	"inside the house"
ó wòzró wó mbówà	(wòzró "front")	"in front of the village"
ô mbúzrà ndáwù	(mbúzrà "behind")	"outside the house"
ôḡmáḡnú	(ḡmáḡnú "top")	"on / on top of"
ôténì		"in / inside"
ôzré	(zré "down")	"under"
ôzré já téèlì		"under the table"
ômbúzrà		"behind"
ô mbúzrà jáámì		"behind mine"

13. *Abstract nouns*

Those nouns dominantly take their class prefix from class 9/10, but they also use prefixes from other classes. Although some of the prefixes they take are singular, they don't have plural counterparts.

mòṣṣèṣṣì	(cl. 3)	"joy, pleasure"
mèlákìzrènè	(cl. 4)	"forgiveness"
lěmèà	(cl. 5)	"agreement"
likákéné	(cl. 5)	"promise"
màtíjà	(cl. 6)	"cultivation, planting "
màkpázrí	(cl. 6)	"rapidity"
èzrólízrólí	(cl. 7)	"sorrow"
mbáki	(cl. 9)	"encouragement"
ndzàwò	(cl. 9)	"hunger"
ṣgíjṣà	(cl. 9)	"force"
ḃòndzà	(cl. 9)	"permission"
kúmbà	(cl. 9)	"boastfulness"
lòṣgê	(cl. 9)	"life, growth"
wóṣgó	(cl. 14)	"fear"
wòndzà	(cl. 14)	"agression"

14. *Mass concept*

Like abstract concepts, uncountable nouns take their prefixes from the plural classes 6, 8 and 10.

màliwá	(cl. 6)	"water"
màwúdzà	(cl. 6)	"oil"
màjìdzà	(cl. 6)	"blood"
ḃèwóli	(cl. 8)	"spit"
mbàzrì	(cl. 10)	"maize"
ṣàṣgá	(cl. 10)	"sand"

15. *Nominal derivations*

Some nouns derive from the roots of the verb, either by maintaining the class 5 prefix or by taking a prefix from a different class.

When they maintain the noun prefix of class 5, they are identical to the infinitival form of the verb from every respect, or they use other strategies such as final vowel change or tone change.

➤ The noun class prefix li- is maintained:

Fully identical to the infinitive form of the verb

lěmèà (éméâ)		"to agree (agree)"
lěmèà	(cl. 5)	"agreement"
likàkéné (kákéné)		"to promise (promise)"
likàkéné	(cl. 5)	"promise"

Vowel and tonal change

lòkà (òkâ)		"to play (play)"
lòkò	(cl. 5)	"game"
lòngà (òngâ)		"to live, to grow"
lòngê	(cl. 5)	"life, growth"
liβàngà (βàngâ)		"to run (run)"
liβàngí	(cl. 5)	"race"

Tonal change

litô (tô)		"to leak (leak)"
litó / màtó	(cl. 5/6)	"drop"

The noun take a different class prefix:

likpézròfà (kpézrófâ)		"to become lame (become lame)"
mòkpézròfà / βàkpézròfâ	(cl. 1/2)	"a lame (person)"
lìzròngò (íróngô)		"to hunt (hunt)"
mòzròngòzròngò / βàzròngòzròngò	(cl. 1/2)	"hunter/s"
lilàkíré (làkíré)		"to forgive (forgive)"
mèlàkìzrènè	(cl. 4)	"forgiveness"
lǎlàfě (áláfê)		"to answer (answer)"
džálàfě / màálàfê	(cl. 5/6)	"answer"
lizràngófà (zràngófâ)		"to inherit (inherit)"
lizràngó / βèzràngó	(cl. 5/8)	"heritage, property"
litíjànà (tíjáná)		"to hoe (hoe)"

màtíjà	(cl. 6)	"cultivation, planting"
liβòtéjá (βótéjà)		"to begin (begin)"
èβòtélí / βèβòtélí	(cl. 7/8)	"beginning"
likùmbá ηγèηγè (kùmbâ ηγèηγè)		"to boast (boast)"
kùmbà	(cl. 9)	"boastfulness"

16. Compound nouns

They are made up of other nouns, a noun and an adjective or they are done by reduplication. In the first two cases, the first noun of the compound determines the agreement system.

Noun + Cd + noun

ηmánà / βáǎnà		"child/ren"
múpánà / wúpánà		"male/s"
ηmánà wà múpánà / βánà βà wúpánà	(cl. 1/2)	"son/s"
mólánà / βálánà		"female/s"
ηmánà wà mólánà / βánà βà βálánà	(cl. 1/2)	"daughter/s"
ɲàmà		"meat"
màlíwà		"water"
ɲàmà màlíwà / ɲàmà dzá màlíwà	(cl. 9/10)	"fish"
dzòηγó / βèóηγó		"pot/s"
dzòηγó dzá m!áíwá / βèóηγó βé m!áíwá	(cl. 5/8)	"water pot"
mòléli / mèléli		"food"
dzòηγó dzá 'móléli / βèóηγó βé m!óléli		"cooking pot/s"

Noun + Cd + Adjective

ηγòndá	"cripple"
mòtò / βàtò	"person"
mòtò à ηγòndá / βàtò βá ηγòndá	"handicapped/s"

Reduplication (root + root)

mòzròηγòzròηγò / βàzròηγòzròηγò	(cl. 1/2)	"hunter/s"
ìzróβézróβê	(cl. 5)	"June"
ìkúlèkúlè	(cl. 5)	"tortoise"
élówàlòwà	(cl. 7)	"moon"
èmàngìmàngì	(cl. 7)	"crowd"

èzrólízrólí	(cl. 7)	"sorrow"
ndz'ééndz'éé / índz'ééndz'éé	(cl. 9/10)	"thorn"
nìjì / jìjì	(cl. 9/10)	"housefly"
tímítímì / tímítímì	(cl. 9/10)	"freeborn"

17. Nominal loans

Loan nouns are perfectly integrated in the noun class system. They have adapted and follow all the principles that govern noun agreement in the language.

➤ They can be in class 3/4 and take the agreement accordingly.

mò-ótówà / mè-ótówà				"car/s"
mó-òtówà	ηm-âzrê			"the whole car"
3.DET-car	3-PRO			
mó-òtówà	mó	mà	ηmèzré	ηmêlê
3.DET-car	3.Cd	PAST	knock	yesterday
"the car knocked him yesterday"				

➤ They can be in class 9/10.

tàksí / tàksí				"taxi/s"
nà	mà	wóβá	tàksí	"I took a taxi"
1sg	PAST	take	9.taxi	

➤ They can be in class 9/10, but take agreement in a different class, e.g. class 3 or 7 as native nouns do.

môní	"money"				
jàwónò	môní	mó	má	βángá	βé-jà
today	9.money	3.Cd	PAST	spoil	8-thing
"today money has spoiled things"					

báísíkl / báísíkl		"bicycle/s"
è-báísíkl	j-àzrê	"the whole bicycle"
7.DET-bicycle	7-PRO	

pùzrí / pùzrí	"cat"						
étò	é	mà	lá	βένέ	ndí	nà	è-pùzrí

7.DET-rat Cd PAST eat COP.PASS CLIT by 7-cat
 "the rat was eaten by the cat"

➤ They can take the locative marker as any native nouns.

wíkì / wíkì "week/s"
 ó wíkì "in one week"
 LOC PAST

➤ They can enter predicative / locative constructions as any native nouns.

zrùkúlù / zrùkúlù "school/s"
 nà βèlì ó zrùkúlù "I am in school "
 1sg COP LOC 9.school

An example like *pùzrí* "cat" is an evidence that loan words are equally phonologically integrated in the language. Indeed, since the phoneme /s/ does not exist in Mokpe, the /s/ from the English loan [pusy] is changed to the Mokpe /zr/. That is one of the reasons why one cannot change or represent the Mokpe sound /zr/ to /s/ as many author did in the Mokpe orthography, since the language does not compromise those two sounds.

18. *Marking syntactic relationship: agreement*

Within a phrase or sentence, all constituents that are grammatically dependent on a specific noun have to be constructed within the same class as this noun.

é-nè	è-lèlà					"this duck (near me)"
7-DemCd	7-duck					
βé-nè	βè-lèlà					"these ducks (near me)"
8-DemCd	8-duck					
lí-zròngá	l-á	ŋw-ánà				"the tooth of the child"
5-tooth	5-CLIT	1-child				
má-zròngá	m-â	β-ánà				"the teeth of the children"
6-tooth	6-CLIT	2-child				
l-úwàtò	l-ângó	lí-téjà	ndí	nă	l-á'ámè	
5-fabric	5-POS	5.COP-red	CLIT	ADV	5-PosPro	
						"your fabric is red like mine"
má-àtò	m-ângó	má-téjà	ndí	nă	má-'ámè	

6-fabric 6-POS 6.COP-red CLIT ADV 6-PosPro
 "your fabrics are red like mines"

19. *The Nominal Prefixes of Mokpe, Urbantu and Protobantu*

Table 4. Nominal Prefixes of Mokpe compared to Urbantu and Protobantu

Class Pairing	Mokpe	Urbantu	Proto-Bantu
1/2	mò-/βà-	*mu-/*va-	*mu-/*ba-
3/4	mò-/mè-	*mu-/*mi-	*mu-/*mi-
5/6	lì-/mà-	*li-/*ma-	*di-/*ma-
5/4	lì-/mì-		
7/8	è-/βè-	*ki-/*vî-	*ki-/*bî-
9/10	ø-/ø- and í-	*ni-/*lî-ni-	*ny-/*ny-
11		*lu-	*du-
12/13		*ka-/*tu-	*ka-/*tu-
14	wò-	*vu-	*bu-
15		*ku-	*ku-
16		*pa-	*pa-
17		*ku-	*ku-
18		*mu-	*mu-
19/8	ì-/βè-	*pî-	*pî-
20		*yu-	20
21		*yî-	21

2. The Noun Phrase

1. *Qualifying the noun: adjectives*

Although they are used as qualifiers of nouns and/or absolute pronouns, adjective can also stand on their own as independents constituents of a sentence.

ndénè	"big"
lètá	"strong"
likàkà or kpápókpápó	"sour"
litě	"sweet"
lìzróṅgò	"deep"
wòòwê	"bad"
gbwámù	"good"

lǒndà	"full"
lìzróndzò	"dry"
lèéjà	"sharp"
litúnà	"blunt"

(1) Attributive use

In their attributive use, adjectives generally follow the nouns.

à	m	ìmá	è-βòndí	ndénè	"s/he dug a big hole"
3sg	PAST	dig	7-hole	big	
à	m	ìmá	è-βòndí	é-zróńó	"s/he dug a deep hole"
3sg	PAST	dig	7-hole	deep	

Adjectives are in formal agreement with the noun they qualify.

Cl.	Prefix	AdjCd	Examples	
1	mò-	mò-	mólánà mòzràlì	"small woman"
2	βà-	βà-	βálánà βàzràlì	"small women"
3	mò-	mò-	ńmēmà mòzràlì	"small heart"
4	mè-	mè-	mèēmà mèzràlì	"small hearts"
5	lì-	lì-	lìzróńgá lizràlì	"small tooth"
6	mà-	mà-	màzróńgá màzràlì	"small teeth"
7	è-	è-	βèlèlà ndénè (> βèlèlà èndénè)	"big duck"
8	βè-	βè-	βèlèlà βèndénè	"big ducks"
9	N-	è-	kémà ndénè (> kémà èndénè)	"big monkey"
10	N-/í-	N-/í-	kémà ndénè (>kémà índénè)	"big monkeys"
14	wò-	wò-	wòńgó wò ndénè	"big brain"
19	ì-		ìńóní ndénè (>ìńóní índénè)	"big bird"
8	βè-	βè-	βèńóní βè ndénè	"big birds"

Note that the noun classes 7, 9, 10 and 19 which are all only vocalic drop before the adjective.

Cl.	Prefix	AdjCd	Examples	
7	è-	è-	èlèlà zràlì	"small duck"
7	è-	è-	èzrù ndénè	"big wall"
9/10	N-/ N-/í-	ì-/í-	ńàmà ndénè	"big fish/es"
9/10	N-/ N-/í-	ì-/í-	kémà zràlì	"small monkey/s"
9/10	N-/ N-/í-	ì-/í-	mbúwà ndénè	"big (heavy) rain/s"

9/10	N-/ N-/i-	i-/i-	ngbázhèlì ndénè	"big cartridge/s"
9/10	N-/ N-/i-	i-/i-	βàkó ndénè	"big mountain/s"
9/10	N-/ N-/i-	i-/i-	wàná ndénè	"big mouth/s"
19	i-	i-	ìlìβòàni zràlì	"small key"

Despite the fact that adjectives are generally placed after the noun, we registered this case (which should be seen as a kind of grammaticalisation?) whereby the adjective *èkòká* is placed before the noun *mólánà*. That is: *èkòká mólánà* "big woman". Similarly, the noun *ηmánà* "child" can be used as adjective and is placed before the nouns.

Cl.	Examples	
7	ηmáné èlèlà	"small duck"
7	ηmáné èjé	"small tree"
9	ηmánâ kémà	"small monkey"
14	ηmáná wòngó	"small brain"
14	ηmáná wùzrû	"small face"
19	ηmáná inóní	"small bird"
10	βáná jàmà	"small fishes"
10	βáná ngbázhèlì	"small cartridges"
8	βáná βèzrû	"small walls"
10	βánáá jàmà	"small fishes"

(2) Predicative use

As a general rule, the predicative use of the adjective is done with the copula *éβéli* followed by the clitic *ndi*.

	ènpóβínà éβéli ndi kpánókpánó	"the lemon is sour"
	ònô múpánà à βéli ndi wòowê	"the man is bad"
	èmúpánà à βéli ndi gbwámù	"the man is good"
	éβù má éβéli ndi têngíl!éí	"the fruit is round"

However, they can be omitted without obstructing the meaning and the relationship of the adjective to the qualifying noun. In those instances, they are just like the attributives. Also, when the subject of the predicate is the neutral pronoun, "it" the concord precedes the adjective.

éβù má jé'tí	"the fruit is strong"
à mà wówá éβù má jét!í	"s/he took a strong fruit"
j-éti (>é-éti)	"it is strong"

dʒɔ!ŋgɔ dʒɔndi	"the pot is full"
à βéli ndi likàzré dʒɔ!ŋgɔ dʒɔndi	"s/he is lifting the full pot"
dʒ-ɔndi (>i-ɔndi)	"it is full"
βéálí βé zrɔndʒi	"the leaves are dry"
à βàné βéálí βé zrɔndʒi	"s/he is carrying dry leaves"
βé zrɔndʒi	"they are dry"
lúwèndi lééjà	"the knife is sharp"
à wóβi lúwèndi lééjà	"s/he has a sharp knife"
lééjà (>lí-ééjà)	"it is sharp"
lúwèndi lítúni	"the knife is blunt"
à wóβi lúwèndi lítúni	"s/he has a blunt knife"
lítúni	"it is blunt"

When the copula is in the past, the past tense marker is placed between the concord and the adjective.

èmbö ètè	"the banana is sweet"
à mà lá mbö ètè	"s/he ate a sweet banana"
è-mà-tè	"it was sweet"
éβòndé é zrɔŋô	"the whole is deep"
à mimá éβòndí é zrɔŋô	"s/he dug a deep hole"
è-mà-zrɔŋô	"it was deep"

2. *Connexive*

Coordination is done with the morpheme *nà* placed between the two elements of the coordination.

ndive nà mbela βá βéli ndí βàòkèli	"Ndive and Mbella are players"
èngbá nà èngòmbá	"the dog and the porcupine"
βě̀nòní βéájě̀ nà èkúlù	"the three birds and the tortoise"

The morpheme *nà* is equally used to coordinate verbal nouns.

éβòndá é mǎ dʒà ó lõkànèà nà lilâ mólèélí ŋmáwú	"the time has come to taste and to eat their food"
---	--

3. *Apposition*

Many nouns can be juxtaposed using short breaks (symbolised here by a comma) in the utterance without necessarily being coordinated by *nà*.

è-ndzòó è mà ηwáá ná mé-ànò lí-ǎnèlì nà lí-ìbà
 7-tiger 7.CD PAST die PREP 4-trick 5-violence COORD 5-teth
 "the tiger died because of tricks, violence and theft"

é-lèlà, ì-wúfà, è-ηgbá, è-ndzòó nà è-ηgòmbá
 7-duck 9-fowl 7-dog 7-tiger COORD 7-porcupine
 "the duck, the fowl, the dog, the tiger and the porcupine"

4. Nominal possession or associative constructions

In 'possessed-possessor' constructions (genitive constructions), the possessor noun is marked by a possessive or genitive concord (GenCd) that is in agreement with the head noun. The GenCd is generally followed by the low tone vowel /a/ which can be viewed as clitic of such constructions, which may be deleted depending on the environment. Indeed it deletes in classes 2, 3, 4, 8, and 14, but survives in classes 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 19, and triggers the change of the vowel /e/ to [j] and the vowel /i/ to [dʒ].

Cl.	Prefix	GenCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà	ηmèní wà à zránǵó	"the guest of the father"
2	βà-	βá	βǎèní βá má ìzránǵó	"the guests of the father"
3	mò-	mó	móǒbò mó pàmà	"the head of the animal"
4	mè-	mé	méǒbó mé pàmà	"the heads of the animal"
5	lì-	lí	lízrònǵá lá ηmánà	"the tooth of the child"
6	mà-	má	máizrònǵá má à βánà	"the teeth of the children"
7	è-	é	élèlà já mòkálá	"the duck of the European"
8	βè-	βé	βélèlà βé βàkálá	"the ducks of the European"
9	N-	è-	èpàmà já ηwánà	"the fish of the child"
10	í-	é-	ìpàmà já ηwánà	"the fishes of the child"
14	wò-	wó	wǒǵó wó mòtò	"the brain of the man"
19	ì-	í	ìlìβwàni dǵá ndáwò	"the key of the door"
8	βè-	βé	βéìlìβwàni βé ndáwò	"the keys of the door"

In some utterances, another morpheme, *má*, was noted in the constructions (e.g. *βǎèní βá má ìzránǵó* "the guests of the father"). The examples below are more instances of the morpheme *má*.

wóǒlò wá má kíngè	"the canoe of the chief"
wóǒlò wá má í kíngè (wóǒlò wá mí kíngè)	"the canoe of the chiefs"
móǒlò má má kíngè	"the canoes of the chief"
móǒlò má má í kíngè (móǒlò má mí kíngè)	"the canoes of the chiefs"

è-wàmbì j-à wòṇá ṇàṅgó j-àṁá kíṅgè
 7-eight 7-CLIT 10.brothers e-CLIT 9.chief
 "all the eight brothers of the chief"

Without being certain, one can say that the vowel /à/ noted above might be a remnant of a disyllabic morpheme *àṁá, the linking element of the two nouns in the genitive construction. This might be quite plausible as we can notice in the utterance above that the so-called clitic vowel /à/ does not delete after the PossCd. Consequently, one might posit that the utterances in square brackets below (left side column) are derived from the ones in slashes (right side) where the PossCd precedes the possible morpheme àṁá.

[wóḍlò wá má kíṅgè] > /wóḍlò wó àṁá kíṅgè/
 [wóḍlò wá má í kíṅgè] > /wóḍlò wó àṁá í kíṅgè/
 [móḍlò má má kíṅgè] > /móḍlò mé àṁá kíṅgè/
 [móḍlò má má í kíṅgè] > /móḍlò mé àṁá í kíṅgè/

Then, the vowel of the PosCd gets deleted but its tone survives and replaces the tone of the vowel /a/ of the disyllabic clitic. Indeed, one can see that where the morpheme *àṁá is not used the PosCd does not undergo any change as in wḥṅḡ wó mòtò, "the brain of the man". Thus, *àṁá is a morpheme whose usage is dropping maybe due to extensive language contacts.

Furthermore, note that the Mokpe genitive can be rendered not only as "the guest of the father" but also as "the father's guest". However, although we have a relationship 'possessed-possessor', Mokpe equally accepts constructions that reverse that order.

Cl.	Prefix	GenCd	Examples	
5	lì-	lí	lǐnà lá mòlèlì or è mòlèlì lǐnà	"the name of the teacher"
6	mà-	má	mǐnà má mòlèlì or ḃálèlì mǐnà	"the names of the teacher"
6	mà-	má	má zróṅá mâ ḃánà or ḃáānà má zróṅá	"the teeth of the children"
7	è-	é-	élèlà já mòkálá or è mòkálá élèlà	"the duck of the European"
8	ḃè-	ḃé	ḃélèlà ḃé ḃàkálá or ḃàkálá ḃélèlà	"the duck of the European"
	wò-	wó	wô zró wó ṅwánà or ìṅmànà wô zró	"the face of the child"

5. Numerals

(3) Cardinal Numbers

In Mokpe, numerals follow the noun they quantify. The numerals from one to five require a class prefix that shows class agreement. There are two roots for the numeral "two": -àké (class 2) and -βă (all the others classes).

-òkó	ηmánà mòkó	"one child"
-àké (for class 2)	βánà βá βàké	"two children"
-βă (for all the other classes)	màámà máβă	"two cheeks"
-jáò	βèwòlò βéjáò	"three works"
-nĩ	kémà ínĩ	"four monkeys"
-tâ	βèwónì βétâ	"five partridges"

More examples of numeral from one to five showing class agreement are presented below. The noun comes first and the numeral follows.

Cl.	Prefix	NumCd	Examples	
1	mò-	mó-	mòtò mòkó	"one person"
2	βà-	βá-	βátò βáβàké βánà βáβàké βálánà βáβàké	"two persons" "two children" "two women"
			βàtò βájáò βàtò βánĩ βàtò βátâ	"three persons" "four persons" "five persons"
3	mò-	mó-	ηmèémà mòkó	"one heart"
4	mè-	mé-	mèémà méβă mèóβò méjáò mèémà ménĩ mèóβò métâ	"two hearts" "three heads" "four hearts" "five heads"
5	lì-	lí-	lĩzrò lòkó	"one eye"
6	mà-	má-	mĩzrò máβă màámà májáò mĩnà mánĩ mĩzrò mátâ	"two eyes" "three cheeks" "four names" "five eyes"
7	è-	é-	èzrù jòkó	"one wall"
8	βè-	βé-	βèzrù βéβă βèlèlèlè βéjáò	"two walls" "three ducks"

			βèwòlò βénĩ βèzrù βétâ	"four works" "five walls"
9	N-	β-	kémà βókó ndzìjá 'βókó kóngí 'βókó	"one monkey" "one road" "one time" or "once"
10	N-/i-	í-	kémà íβă ndzìjá íβă kémà íjáò ɲàmà ínĩ ɲàmà ítâ	"two animals" "two roads" "three animals" "four fishes" "five fishes"
14	wò-	wó-/wó-	wòólò wòkó wòngó 'wókó	"one canoe"
19	i-	í-	ìnóní 'dʒókó	"one bird"
8	βè-	βé-	βènóní βéβă βèlìβòàni βéjáò βènóní βénĩ βèwóni βétâ	"two birds" "three keys" "four birds" "five partridges"

While the agreement of all the other classes seem perfect and in accordance to the general tendency observes so far, class 9 shows a β- consonant whose origin cannot be explained.

After five, the other numerals are just placed after the noun they quantify without any morpheme materialising the link.

mòtówá	βèlìβòàni mòtówá	"six keys"
lìzràmbá	íkíngè lìzràmbá	"seven chiefs"
wàmbì	màákpà wàmbì	"eight bags"
lùùwá	βèβózári lùùwá	"nine bottles"
lǝmè	mèlòngá lǝmè	"ten buckets"
mbàngè nà jòkó	βèkí mbàngè nà jòkó	"twenty-one places"
zràíjáò nà βéβă	βèèzré zràíjáò nà βéβă	"thirty-two bones"
mènìménĩ	βèálí mènìménĩ	"forty leaves"
mènìwàmbì	màwèndì mènìwàmbì	"eighty knives"
ègbê	mèzròkò ègbê	"hundred songs"

When used in counting, i.e. when the numeral does not have an overt head noun that it quantifies the first five numerals are prefixed with the pair of class 7/8. The singular numeral (one) takes the prefix of class 7, *é-*, while the plural numerals (4-5) take the

prefix of class 8, *βé-*. From six to ten, the numerals are just independent nouns. From eleven upwards, the numerals are composed of three morphemes except the multiples of ten. The counting is done by the addition of ten to one (for 11), ten to two (for 13), ten to three (for 15), etc. The addition is rendered by the coordinator *nà* "and"/"with" placed between the two numbers. After nine has been added to ten, there is a single noun to express the multiple of ten, and the addition process starts again till the next multiple of ten, etc. Note that from 11 to 15, the pair of prefix 7/8 is maintained no matter whether it is ten or any of its multiples.

jòkó	"one"	mbàngè nà jòkó	"twenty-one"
βéβă	"two"	mbàngè nà βéβă	"twenty-two"
βéjáo	"three"	mbàngè nà βéjáo	"twenty-three"
βénĩ	"four"	mbàngè nà βénĩ	"twenty-four"
βétâ	"five"	mbàngè nà βétâ	"twenty-five"
mòtówá	"six"	mbàngè nà mòtówá	"twenty-six"
lizràmbá	"seven"	mbàngè nà lizràmbá	"twenty-seven"
wàmbì	"eight"	mbàngè nà wàmbì	"twenty-eight"
lùùwá	"nine"	mbàngè nà lùùwá	"twenty-nine"
ljòmè	"ten"	zráíjáo	"thirty"
ljòmè nà jòkó	"eleven"	zráíjáo nà jòkó	"thirty-one"
ljòmè nà βéβă	"twelve"	zráíjáo nà βéβă	"thirty-two"
ljòmè nà βéjáo	"thirteen"	zráíjáo nà βéjáo	"thirty-three"
ljòmè nà βénĩ	"fourteen"	zráíjáo nà βénĩ	"thirty-four"
ljòmè nà βétâ	"fifteen"	zráíjáo nà βétâ	"thirty-five"
ljòmè nà mòtówá	"sixteen"	zráíjáo nà mòtówá	"thirty-six"
ljòmè nà lizràmbá	"seventeen"	zráíjáo nà lizràmbá	"thirty-seven"
ljòmè nà wàmbì	"eighteen"	zráíjáo nà wàmbì	"thirty-eight"
ljòmè nà lùùwá	"nineteen"	zráíjáo nà lùùwá	"thirty-nine"
mbàngè	"twenty"	mèniménĩ	"forty"

The base *mèni* is found in the multiple of ten from 40 to 90.

mènimétâ	"fifty"
mènimòtówá	"sixty"
mènilizràmbá	"seventy"
mèniwàmbì	"eighty"
mènilùùwá	"ninety"

The numerals hundred, thousand and million are the nouns below.

ègbê	"hundred"
ìkólí	"thousand"
ìlùnì	"million"

The privative adjective *tò* "no" functions as a quantifier used with either mass nouns or plural countable nouns to indicate a lack or zero quantity of something.

Cl.2	tò βánà	"no children"
Cl.4	tò mèóẏrô	"no rivers"
Cl.6	tò mǎnà	"no names"
Cl.8	tò βèwòṅgó	"no boxes"
Cl.10	tò kémà	"no monkeys"
Cl.6	tò màwúdzà	"no oil"
Cl.8	tò βèòlì	"no spit"

The adjective *tòímá* "each" is placed before the noun to mark individuality and singularity.

Cl.1	tòímá ṅmánà	"each child"
Cl.3	tòímá mòóβò	"each head"
Cl.5	tòímá 'lító	"each ear"
Cl.7	tòímá èzrù	"each wall"
Cl.9	tòímá mbèzrà	"each boy"
Cl.14	tòímá 'wóẏrô	"each face"
Cl.19	tòímá ìnòní	"each bird"

(4) Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal numbers are built using a three-part construction including the 3sg, the verb *lùkìzrè* "to make sth up" and the cardinal number. The expression means literally, "which leads one", "which leads two", "which leads three", "which leads four", etc.

à úkíẏré jòkó	"first"	à úkíẏré mòtówá	"sixth"
à úkíẏré βéβǎ	"second"	à úkíẏré lizràmbá	"seventh"
à úkíẏré βéjáò	"third"	à úkíẏré wàmbì	"eighth"
à úkíẏré βénì	"fourth"	à úkíẏré lùùwá	"ninth"
à úkíẏré βétâ	"fifth"	à úkíẏré lǝmè	"tenth"

However, when a noun is added to the construction, the ordinal for "first" changes completely into a genitive construction with the morpheme *wòẏrô* "face?" preceded by a concord and the head noun.

Cl.	Prefix	OrdCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà	mòtò wà wòzrô	"the first person"
3	mò-	mò	mòóòbò mò wòzrô	"the first head"
5	lì-	lì-	liámà là wòzrô	"the first cheek"
7	è-	è-	èzrù jà wòzrô	"the first wall"
9	N-	è-	kémà jà wòzrô	"the first monkey"
14	wò-	wó-	wòólò wà wòzrô	"the first canoe"
19	ì-	í-	ilìbòàni dʒà wòzrô	"the first key"

è-ηgbèndè j-à wòzrô j-à ηmâ
 7-month 7-CLIT 14.first 7-CLIT 9.year

The first month of the year

The "irregularity" starts and ends with the ordinal numeral "first". From "second" the regular formula is used. But interestingly, the plural form of the nouns ordered is also used. Then, the formula is: Numeral concord + úkíkré + plural form of noun + and plural form of equivalent cardinal number.

Cl.	Prefix	OrdCd	Examples	
1/2	mò-	à	mòtò à úkíkré bàtò báβă mòtò à úkíkré bàtò bájàò mòtò à úkíkré bàtò bánĩ mòtò à úkíkré bàtò bátâ	"the second person" "the third person" "the fourth person" "the fifth person"
3/4	mò-	mó-	mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò méβă mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò méjàò mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò ménĩ mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò métâ	"the second head" "the third head" "the fourth head" "the fifth head"
5/6	lì-	lí-	liámà lúkíkré màámà máβă liámà lúkíkré màámà májàò liámà lúkíkré màámà mánĩ liámà lúkíkré màámà mátâ	"the second cheek" "the third cheek" "the fourth cheek" "the fifth cheek"
7/8	è-	é	èzrù júkíkré bèzrù béβă èzrù júkíkré bèzrù béjàò èzrù júkíkré bèzrù benĩ èzrù júkíkré bèzrù betâ	"the second wall" "the third wall" "the fourth wall" "the fifth wall"
9/10	N-	é	kémà júkíkré íkémà íβă kémà júkíkré íkémà íjàò kémà júkíkré íkémà ínèĩ (ínĩ)	"the second monkey" "the third monkey" "the fourth monkey"

			kémà júkízáré íkémà ítâ	"the fifth monkey"
14/5	wò-	wó-	wòólò wùúkízáré móólò máǵǵá wòólò wùúkízáré móólò máǵǵáò wòólò wùúkízáré móólò mǵní wòólò wùúkízáré móólò mǵtǵ	"the second monkey" "the third monkey" "the fourth monkey" "the fifth monkey"
19/8	ì-	í-	ìnóní dzúkízáré βénóní βéǵǵá ìnóní dzúkízáré βénóní βéǵǵáò ìnóní dzúkízáré βénóní βéní ìnóní dzúkízáré βénóní βétǵ	"the second monkey" "the third monkey" "the fourth monkey" "the fifth monkey"

6. Pronouns

Mokpe makes use of a variety of words that substitute for nouns, i.e. pronouns. These include: absolute pronouns (or/and subject concords), demonstrative pronouns, independent pronouns, interrogative pronouns and possessive pronouns.

Like in many Bantu languages, genuine absolute pronouns in Mokpe are for the 1st and 2nd persons singular and plural, i.e. for the senders and the receivers.

	Subject case		Object case	
1sg	nà	"I"	imbâ	"me"
2sg	ò	"you"	wâ	"you"
1pl	ì	"we"	ízáô	"us"
2pl	è	"you"	íǵô	"you"

The 3sg and 3pl, the substitutives, vary according to the noun they represent. We have the subject case and the object case.

➤ The subject cases prefixes or subject concord are as follows:

Cl.	Prefix	SP	Examples	
1	mò-	à-	émólánà àlâ	"the woman eats"
2	ǵà-	ǵá-	ǵáálánà ǵálâ	"the women eat"
3	mò-	mó-	móòndó móóǵì líǵùmbú	"the tail has hair"
4	mè-	mé-	méòndó méóǵì màǵùmbú	"the tails have hair"
5	lí-	lí-	lízáǵǵá líké ǵàmà	"the tooth cuts meat"
6	mà-	má-	mǵzáǵǵá máké ǵàmà	"the teeth cut meat"
7	è-	é-	élèlâ éǵô màléwá	"the duck drinks water"
8	βè-	βé-	βélèlâ βéǵô màléwá	"the ducks drink water"
9	N-	è-	éǵǵâ èlómà	"the dog barks"

10	í-	í-	íngbâ ílómà	"the dogs bark"
14	wò-	wó-	wóǎngó wólùtèjà	"the brain thinks"
19	ì-	í-	ínòní ikòdòwà	"the bird flies"

➤ As for the object case prefixes we have:

Cl.	Prefix	ObjP	Examples	
1	mò-	mó-	nà mà ɲmɛ̀nɛ́ /mó-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ɲmɛ̀ní wǎmì)	"I saw him/her" ("I saw my guest")
2	ɓà-	ɓá-	nà mà ɓ-ɛ̀nɛ́ /ɓá-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mà ɓáɛ̀ní ɓámì)	"I saw them" ("I saw my guests")
3	mò-	mó-	nà mà ɲmɛ̀nɛ́ /mó-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ móótó)	"I saw it" ("I saw the green snake")
4	mè-	mé-	nà mà méɛ̀nɛ́ /mé-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ méótó)	"I saw them" ("I saw the green snakes")
5	lí-	lí-	nà mà lénɛ́ /lí-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ lízrò)	"I saw it" ("I saw the eye")
6	mà-	má-	nà mà méɛ̀nɛ́ /má-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ mízrò)	"I saw them" ("I saw the eyes")
7	è-	é-	nà mà jénɛ́ /é-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ élèlà jámì)	"I saw him/her" ("I saw my duck")
8	ɓè-	ɓé-	nà mà ɓéɛ̀nɛ́ /ɓé-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ɓélèlà ɓéámì)	"I saw them" ("I saw my ducks")
9	N-	è-	nà mà jénɛ́ /é-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ɲàmà jámì)	"I saw it" ("I saw my animal")
10	í-	í-	nà mà dzénɛ́ /í-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ípàmà dzámì)	"I saw them" ("I saw my animals")
14	wò-	wó-	nà mà wénɛ́ /wó-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ wóǎlò wénì)	"I saw it" ("I saw his canoe")
19	ì-	í-	nà mà dzénɛ́ /wó í-ɛ̀nɛ́ / (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ínòní dzázrú)	"I saw it" ("I saw our bird")

(5) Dependent Possessive Pronouns

The dependent possessive pronouns are made up of a root preceded by a possessive concord (PosCd) which is in agreement with the head noun.

1sg	-ámì	"my"
2sg	-àṅgó	"your"
3sg	-éní	"his"
1pl	-ázzú	"our"
2pl	-áṛú	"your (pl)"
3pl	-áwú	"their"

The possessive pronouns require the prefixes below.

Cl.	Prefix	PosCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà-	ḡmèná àmì or ḡmèní wāmì /ḡmèní wà-ámì/ ḡmèná ṅgó or ḡmèní wàngó /ḡwèní wà-àṅgó/ ḡmèné éní or ḡmèní wèní /ḡmèní wà-éní/ ḡmèná ázzú or ḡmèní wázzú /ḡmèní wà-ázzú/ ḡmèná áṛú or ḡmèní wáṛú /ḡmèní wà-áṛú/ ḡmèná áwú or ḡmèní wáwú /ḡmèní wà-áwú/	"my guest" "your guest" "his guest" "our guest" "your (pl) guest" "their guest"
2	βà-	βá-	βáèná àmì or βáèní βámì /βáèní βá-ámì/ βáèní βàngó /βáèní βá-àṅgó/ βáèní βéní /βáèní βá-éní/ βáèní βázzú /βáèní βá-ázzú/ βáèní βáṛú /βáèní βá-áṛú/ βáèní βáwú /βáèní βá-áwú/	"my guests" "your guests" "his wives" "our guests" "your (pl) guests" "their guests"
3	mò-	mó-	móðò ḡwámì /móðò mó-ámì/ móðò ḡwàngó /móðò mó-àṅgó/ móðò ḡwèní /móðò mó-éní/ móðò ḡwázzú /móðò mó-ázzú/ móðò ḡwáṛú /móðò mó-áṛú/ móðò ḡwáwú /móðò mó-áwú/	"my head" "your head" "his head" "our head" "your (pl) head" "their head"
4	mè-	mé-	méòndó méámí	"my tails"

			méòndó méàngó méòndó méení méòḃó méázzú méòḃó méápnú mēḃḃó méáwú	"your tails" "his tails" "our heads" "your (pl) heads" "their heads "
5	lì-	lí-	lǐzròngá lámì /lǐzròngá lí-ámì/ lǐzròngá lánḡó /lǐzròngá lí-àngó/ lǐzròngá léní /lǐzròngá lí-éní/ lǐzròngá lázzú /lǐzròngá lí-ázzú/ lǐzròngá lápnú /lǐzròngá lí-ápnú/ lǐzròngá láwú /lǐzròngá lí-áwú/	"my tooth" "your tooth" "his tooth" "our tooth" "your (pl) tooth" "their tooth"
6	mà-	má-	mǎzròngá mámì /mǎzròngá má-ámì/ mǎzròngá mǎngó /mǎzròngá má-àngó/ mǎzròngá méní /mǎzròngá má-éní/ mǎzròngá mázzú /mǎzròngá má-ázzú/ mǎzròngá mápnú /mǎzròngá má-ápnú/ mǎzròngá máwú /mǎzròngá má-áwú/	"my teeth" "your teeth" "his teeth" "our teeth" "your (pl) teeth" "their teeth"
7	è-	é-	élèlà á mì or élèlà já mì /élèlà é-á ámì/ élèlà á 'ḡó or élèlà já 'ḡó /élèlà é-á àḡó/ élèlà jéní /élèlà é-á éní/ élèlà jázzú (élèlà é-á ázzú/ élèlà á pnú or élèlà jápnú /élèlà é-á ápnú/ élèlà á wú or élèlà jáwú /élèlà é-á áwú/	"my duck" "your duck" "his duck" "our duck" "your (pl) duck" "their duck"
8	ḃè-	ḃé-	ḃélèlà ḃéámì ḃélèlà ḃé'àngó /ḃélèlà ḃé àḡó/ ḃélèlà ḃééní ḃélèlà ḃéázzú	"my ducks" "your ducks" "his ducks" "our ducks"

			βèlèlà βéáńú βèlèlà βéáwú	"your (pl) ducks" "their ducks"
9	N-	è-	ńàmà á mì or ńàmà jámì /ńàmà è-ámì/ kémà jàngó /kémà è-àngó/ kémà jéní /kémà è-éní/ kémà jázrú /kémà è-ázrú/ kémà jàńú /kémà è-áńú/ kémà jàwú /kémà è-áwú/	"my animal" "your monkey" "his monkey" "our monkey" "your (pl) monkey" "their monkey"
10	N-	í-	ínàmà dzámì /ínàmà í-ámì/ ínàmà dzàngó /ínàmà í-àngó/ ínàmà dzééní /ínàmà í-éní/ ínàmà dzázrú /ínàmà í-ázrú/ ínàmà dzáńú /ínàmà í-áńú/ ínàmà dzáwú /ínàmà í-áwú/	"my animals" "your animals" "his animals" "our animals" "your (pl) animals" "their animals"
14	wò	wó-	wǒǒlò wámì /wǒǒlò wó-ámì/ wǒǒlò wàngó /wǒǒlò wó-àngó/ wǒǒlò wéní /wǒǒlò wó-éní/ wǒǒlò wázrú /wǒǒlò wó-ázrú/ wǒǒlò wáńú /wǒǒlò wó-áńú/ wǒǒlò wáwú /wǒǒlò wó-áwú/	"my canoe" "your canoe" "his canoe" "our boat" "your (pl) canoe" "their canoe"
19	ì-	í-	ínòní dzámì /ínòní í-ámì/ ínòní dzàngó /ínòní í-àngó/ ínòní dzééní /ínòní í-éní/ ínòní dzázrú /ínòní í-ázrú/ ínòní dzáńú /ínòní í-áńú/ ínòní dzáwú /ínòní í-áwú/	"my bird" "your bird" "his bird" "our bird" "your (pl) bird" "their bird"

(6) Demonstratives

The demonstrative is constructed with a consonantic root (-C-), a nasal or prenasal, flanked with an affix on either side. I call this consonantic root the demonstrative pronoun (DemPro).

Proximal	-n-	"this"
Distal	-ng-	"that"

The affix of the left side, the prefix, is definitely that demonstrative concord (DemCd) while the affix on the right side, the suffix, is the highly predictable vowels o, u, a, e, i. The distribution is done as follows:

- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /o/, then the suffix is /o/ for both the proximal and the distal;
- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /a/, then the suffix is /u/ for the proximal and /a/ for the distal;
- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /e/, then the suffix is /e/ for both the proximal and the distal;
- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /i/, then the suffix is /i/ for both the proximal and the distal;

Tonally, while the melodie for both the proximal and distal is L-H in class 1, it is H-L for the proximal and H-H for the distal for all the other classes. All this information is summarised below:

Vowel of DemCd	Suffix					
	Proximal			distal		
/o/	/o/	ò-n-ó mó-n-ò wó-n-ò	(cl.1) (cl.3) (cl.14)	/o/	ò-ηg-ó mó-ηg-ó wó-ηg-ó	(cl.1) (cl.3) (cl.14)
/a/	/u/	βá-n-ù má-n-ù	(cl.2) (cl.6)	/a/	βá-ηg-á má-ηg-á	(cl.2) (cl.6)
/e/	/e/	mé-n-è é-n-è βé-n-è	(cl.4) (cl.7) (cl.8)	/e/	mé-ηg-é é-ηg-é βé-ηg-é	(cl.4) (cl.7) (cl.8)
/i/	/i/	lí-n-ì í-n-ì í-n-ì	(cl.5) (cl.10) (cl.19)	/i/	lí-ηg-í í-ηg-í í-ηg-í	(cl.5) (cl.10) (cl.19)

The demonstratives require the prefixes below.

Cl.	Prefix	DemCd-Rt-suffix	Examples	
1	mò-	ò-n-ó ò-ηg-ó	ònó mòtò òηgó mòtò	"this person" "that person"
2	βà-	βá-n-ù βá-ηg-á	βánù βàtò βánjá βàtò	"these people" "those people"

3	mò-	mó-n-ò mó-ηg-ó	mónò ηmēmà mónḡó ηmēmà	"this heart" "that heart"
4	mè-	mé-n-è mé-ηg-é	ménè mèēmà ménḡé mèēmà	"these hearts" "those hearts"
5	lì-	lí-n-ì lí-ηg-í	línì lìzròḡá línḡí lìzròḡá	"this tooth" "that tooth"
6	mà-	má-n-ù má-ηg-á	mánù màzròḡá mánḡá màzròḡá	"these teeth" "those teeth"
7	è-	é-n-è é-ηg-é	énè èzrù énḡé zrù	"this wall" "that wall"
8	βè-	βé-n-è βé-ηg-é	βénè βèzrù βénḡé βèzrù	"these walls" "those walls"
9	N-	é-n-ê (è-n-ê) é-ηg-ê (è-ηg-ê)	énê kémà énḡê kémà	"this monkey" "that monkey"
10	N-	í-n-ì í-ηg-î	ínì kémà ínḡî kémà	"these monkeys" "those monkeys"
14	wò	wó-n-ò wó-ηg-ó	wónò wólò wónḡó wólò	"this canoe" "that canoe"
19	ì-	í-n-ì í-ηg-í	ínì ìnòní ínḡí ìnòní	"this bird" "that bird"

Note the presence of a floating low in class 9, *énê kémà* "this monkey" *énḡê kémà* "that monkey". That low tone creates a dowstep of a high in utterances like *énḡé 'jémbé* "that animal".

Also note that the DemCd for class 9 is the vowel /e-/ of class 7. However, although in the examples above the vowel /é-/ of class 7 and 9 all bear a high tone, the true tone of class 9 is low, /è-/. The high tone of the vowel /é-/ of class 9 is due to its position (initial) and its function as determiner. The real tone of class 9 is illustrated in the paradigm below where the demonstrative enters a presentative form. The vowel /é-/ (*èzrù é-ηḡê*) of class 7 is high while the one of the class 9 /è/ (*ḡàmà è-ηḡê*) is low.

Class 7		Class 9	
èzrù éḡê	"that is a wall"	ḡàmà èḡê	"that is a meat"
jòmà éḡê	"that is a thing"	mbóli èḡê	"that is a goat"
èβózrí éḡê	"that is a bottle"	mbòkò èḡê	"that is a chair"
èβùmá éḡê	"that is a fruit"	kòòḡà èḡê	"that is a calabash"
èwòló éḡê	"that is a work"	tũ èḡê	"that is a "room"

èzrù ɛ̀ngê	"that is a wall"	ndáwò ɛ̀ngê	"that is a house"
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Interesting to also note is the fact that tonally, the morpheme for ‘that’ ends with a low tone when placed at utterance-end position:

Cl.1	ɲmána ɔ̀ngô	"that is a child"
Cl.3	mòóβò mɔ̀ngô	"that is a head"
Cl.5	lɪzrɔ̀ngá língî	"that is a tooth"
Cl.7	èlèlà ɛ̀ngê	"that is a duck"
Cl.9	ɲàmà ɛ̀ngê	"that is a animal"
Cl.14	wǎlò wɔ̀ngô	"that is a canoe"
Cl.19	ìnòní íngî	"that is a bird"
Cl.6	màliwá mángâ	"that is water"
Cl.8	βèwólì βéngê	"that is spit"

(7) Summary

The table below gives a summary of the qualifiers, associative constructions and pronouns concords.

Cl.	Prefix	AdjCd	GenCd	NumCd	OrdCd	PosCd	DemCd
1	mò-	mò-	wà	mó-	wà	wà-	ò-C-o
2	βà-	βà-	βá	βá-		βá-	βá-C-u/-a
3	mò-	mò-	mó	mó-	mò	mó-	mó-C-o
4	mè-	mè-	mé	mé-		mé-	mé-C-e
5	lí-	lí-	lí	lí-	lí-	lí-	lí-C-i
6	mà-	mà-	má	má-		má-	má-C-u/-a
7	è-	è-	é-	é-	è-	é-	é-C-e
8	βè-	βè-	βé	βé-		βé-	βé-C-e
9	N-	è-	è-	è-	è-	è-	è-C-e
10	N-/í-	N-/í-	é-	í-		í-	í-C-i
14	wò-	wò-	wó	wó-	wó-	wó-	wó-C-o
19	ì-	ì-	í	í-	í-	í-	í-C-i
8	βè-	βè-	βé	βé-		βé-	βé-C-e

(8) Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns in Mokpe are generally autonomous words that function independent of the noun which they may accompany. They are placed before the noun.

➤ ímá "which?"

Cl.1	ímá ḡmánà	"which child?"
Cl.2	ímá βánà	"which children?"
Cl.3	ímá ḡmēmà	"which heart?"
Cl.4	ímá mèémà	"which hearts?"
Cl.5	ímá lizròḡgá	"which tooth?"
Cl.6	ímá màzròḡgá	"which teeth?"
Cl.7	ímá èlèlà	"which duck?"
Cl.8	ímá βèlèlà	"which ducks?"
Cl.9	ímá 'kémà	"which monkey?"
Cl.10	ímá 'kémà	"which monkeys?"
Cl.14	ímá 'wózrô	"which face?"
Cl.19	ímá ìnòní	"which bird?"

➤ ndʒê "who?"

Cl.1	ndʒê à βélí ḡmánà	"who is a child?"
Cl.3	ndʒê à βélí ḡmēmà	"who is a heart?"
Cl.5	ndʒê à βélí lizròḡgá	"who is a tooth?"
Cl.7	ndʒê à βélí èlèlà	"who is a duck?"
Cl.9	ndʒê à βélí ḡàmà	"who is an animal?"
Cl.14	ndʒê à βélí wǒlò	"who is a canoe?"
Cl.19	ndʒê à βélí ìwónì	"who is a cartridge?"
Cl.5	ndʒê à βélí málíwá	"who is water?"
Cl.8	ndʒê à βélí βéwólì	"who is spit?"

The interrogative pronoun is placed after the personal pronoun in an attributive sentence.

ndʒó òḡḡô (ndʒê òḡḡô)	"who is it?"
mbâ ndʒê	"who am I?"
wââ ndʒê	"who are you?"
mòò ndʒê	"who is s/he?"
ízrô ndʒê	"who are we?"
íḡô ndʒê	"who are you?"
wóò ndʒê	"who are they?"

➤ ó 'né "where?"

The interrogative pronoun ó 'né "where?" is bi-morphemic: the locative morpheme ó and the root né.

Cl.1	ó 'né môtô	"where is the person?"
Cl.3	ó 'né mòóβò	"where is the head?"
Cl.5	ó 'né lízròṅgá	"where is the tooth?"
Cl.7	ó 'né élélà	"where is the duck?"
Cl.9	ó 'né èkémà	"where is the monkey?"
Cl.4	ó 'né wôzrô	"where is the face?"
Cl.9	ó 'né ínòní	"where is the bird?"

➤ mǎmé "what?"

mǎmélí móròṅgí /mǎmé βélí móròṅgí/	"what is the price?"
mǎm 'ó mǎéné /mǎmé ó mǎ èné/	"what did you see?"
mǎm 'óó mǎgbèé /mǎmé ó mǎ gbèé/	"what did you do?"
mǎmé	"what is it?"

➤ How many?

The pronoun -tí "how many?" is the only one which take a concord in agreement with the head noun.

(Cl.2) βánà βátí

βá-nà βá-tí

2.palm tree 2-IntPro

"how many children?"

(Cl.4) mèémà métí

mè-émà mé-tí

4.palm tree 4-IntPro

"how many hearts?"

(Cl.6) mǐjà mǎtí

m-ǐjà mǎ-tí

6.palm tree 6-IntPro

"how many palm trees?"

(Cl.8) βèóṅgó βétí

βè-óṅgó βé-tí

8.pot 6-IntPro

"how many pots?"

(Cl.10) kólà í tí

Kólà í-tí

10.kola 10-IntPro

"how many kola nuts?"

Thus, apart from -tí the other interrogatives can stand on their own. In other to be autonomous, -tí "how many?" will take the default prefix βé-.

ímá? "which?"

mámé? "what?"

ndʒê? "who?"

ó 'né? "where?"

βé-tí "how many?"

(9) General Proforms

➤ -àzrê "all, whole"

The general proform -àzrê "all, whole" is a root that requires a concord that agrees with the head noun. Although the language uses the root -àzrê for "all" and "whole", the distinction between "all" and "whole" is done through the selection of the appropriate number concord: a plural prefix for "all" and a singular prefix for "whole".

Cl.	Prefix	GprnCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà-	èmólánà wàzrê	"the whole woman"
2	βà-	βá	βáǎnà βâzrê	"all the children"
3	mò-	mó	mólòngá ɲmâzrê	"the whole bucket"
4	mè-	mé	mélòngá méàzrê	"all the buckets"
5	lì-	lí	lītàngá lâzrê	"the whole foot"
6	mà-	má	mǎtàngá mâzrê	"all the feet"
7	è-	é-	ézrù jâzrê	"the whole wall"
8	βè-	βé	βézrù βéàzrê	"all the walls"
9	N-	è-	ìmbówà jâzrê	"the whole village"
10	í-	í-	ìmbówà dzâzrê	"all the villages"
14	wò-	wó	wôzrô wâzrê	"the whole face"
19	ì	í	ínóní dzâzrê	"the whole bird"

The plural subject pronouns take the concord *βá-* irrespective of the person:

ìzrô βâzrê	"we all"
ìjô βâzrê	"you all"
wô βâzrê	"they all"

Once again, one must distinguish between the /é-/ of class 7 and the one of class 9 /è-/.

Class 7		Class 9	
éèjé jâzrê	"the whole tree"	ètũ jâzrê	"the whole room"
ékí jâzrê	"the whole place"	èngbèndè jâzrê	"the whole month"
ézurù jâzrê	"the whole wall"	èmbówà jâzrê	"the whole village"
élùwà jâzrê	"the whole market"	èβàkó jâzrê	"the whole mountain"
éβózrí jâzrê	"the whole bottle"	èndáwò jâzrê	"the whole house"

➤ -ítí and méné "alone, self"

The expression of 'alone' is done with the root -ítí preceded by twice the corresponding independent pronoun. While the first independent is unbound, the second is attached -ítí. In the singular forms, it is the independent pronouns mbá "me", wá "you" and mó "him/her" which are repeated before the root -ítí, while in the plural forms it is the only concord *βá-*.

mbâ mbítí	/mbâ mbá-ítí/	"I alone"
wâ wítí	/wâ wá-ítí/	"you alone"
mô ηmítí	/mô mó-ítí/	"s/he alone"
ìzrô βítí	/ìzrô βá-ítí/	"we alone"
ìjô βítí	/ìjô βá-ítí/	"you alone"
wô βítí	/wô βá-ítí/	"they alone"

Note that the morpheme *méné* can also be used for the plural persons.

ìzrô 'méné	"we alone"
ìjô 'méné	"you alone"
wô 'méné	"they alone"

7. Prepositions and prepositional phrases

The preposition *nà* "with" is used in abstract nouns to indicate manner of action.

nà ηgínà	"with force"
nà ndzàwò	"with hunger"

nà wô	"among them"
nátèè èngómbé	"until the evening"
ó mbówà	"to the village"
ô mbúzárà jàámì	"behind mine"
ô mbúzárà mbówà	"outside of the village"
ô mbúzárà mòtò	"behind the man"
ô mbúzárà ndáwù	"outside the house"
ô zré já téèlì	"under the table"
óténá mbówà or ó mbówà	"in the village"
óténá ndáwù	"inside the house"
ówòzró wó mbówà	"in front of the village"
ówòzró wó ndáwù	"in front of the house"
wêkí jélùwà	"at the market place"
wě̀lùwà	"at the market"
wítí itèní	"in the mid"

IV. THE VERB AND THE VERB PHRASE

1. Verbal Inflection

The verb, like in any other language of the world, denotes an action (*lǎkà* "to pass"), a process (*lǒnà* "to grow") or a state (*lìβé lókízáré* "to be sick"). Grammatically, it changes according to person, time, mood and class in concord with the noun class of the subject. Syntactically, it forms the predicate which can be verbal or non-verbal. Except for the first person of the imperative form, the verb stem must be preceded by a verbal pronoun and a/several temporal or modal modifier(s).

1. The isolated and infinitive forms

The isolated form of the verb is its shape without the infinitive marker *lì-*. The infinitive marker in Mokpe is the class prefix *lì-* which is attached to a root. This prefix is realised [l-] before roots starting with vowels and remains [lì-] before roots starting with consonants. The examples below are selected according to the shape and length of the syllable as well as the tonal patterns of the verb.

Examples

a. Monosyllabic roots

<i>lâ</i>	"eat"	<i>lilâ</i>	"to eat"
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pkâ	"fall"	lipkâ	"to fall"
ɲó	"drink"	liɲó	"to drink"
ndê	"go"	lèndê	"to go"
ɲwâ	"die"	liɲwâ	"to die"
ɲgbâ	"give"	liɲgbâ	"to give"

b. Disyllabic roots

íḃá	"steal"	líḃà	"to steal"
áɲgâ	"count"	lǎɲgâ	"to count"
énê	"see"	lěné	"to see"
dʒàâ	"come"	lidʒǎ	"to come"
jòô	"laugh"	lijô	"to laugh"
mèê	"swallow"	limě	"to swallow"
βélê	"call"	liβélê	"to call"
zrùmâ	"bow"	lizrùmâ	"to bow"
kóká	"bite"	likókà	"to bite"
timbá	"return"	litimbá	"to return"

c. Trisyllabic roots

ókówâ	"learn"	lőkòwà	"to learn"
ándzílê	"carry"	làndzílê	"to carry"
kpééjà	"enter"	likpéèjà	"to enter"
kààwá	"divide"	likààwá	"to divide"
liβówâ	"open"	lililβówá	"to open"
lùtèjà	"think"	lilùtèjà	"to think"
límirê	"extinguish"	lilimirê	"to extinguish"
kóngámá	"lie down"	likóngàmà	"to lie down"
nàɲgôzré	"lie down"	linàɲgôzré	"to lie down"
kàmbówâ	"pour"	likàmbówà	"to pour"
zróɲgìzrê	"dry" (fish)	lizróɲgìzrê	"to dry" (fish)

d. Quadrisyllabic roots

ókánéâ	"taste"	lőkànéâ	"to taste"
liìòzré	"sit down"	ljò'ózá	"to sit down"
éɲélélê	"expose"	lěɲélélê	"to expose"

e. Compound verb forms

tíjà lùmbè	"slap"	litíjà lùmbè	"to slap"
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ókâ wóngó	"fear"	lőkà wóngó	"to fear"
zríngâ or zríngá ngòlì	"snore"	lizríngà ngòlì	"to snore"
zrùmá mâwó ngóngó	"kneel"	lizrùmá mâwó ngóngó	"to kneel"

While the tone of the verb prefix is always low, the tonal pattern of the base varies. However, this variation allows a classification of the verbs in tone groups (cf. subsection IV.3).

Note that the monosyllabic and disyllabic verb roots largely prevail in the language.

2. The verbal root templates

In the unmarked case, the verbal roots have the following CV templates:

Table 5. Mokpe verb syllable templates

CV shapes	Examples				
a. CV	ɲó	"drink"	ɲgbâ	"give"	
b. V.CV	íḃá	"steal"	ángâ	"count"	
CV.V	jòḃ	"laugh"	mèê	"swallow"	
CV.CV	ḃélê	"call"	zrùmâ	"bow"	
c. V.CV.CV	ókówâ	"learn"	ándzílê	"carry"	
CV.V.CV	kpééjá	"enter"	kààwá	"divide"	
CV.CV.CV	liḃówâ	"open"	nàngôzré	"lie down"	
d. V.CV.CV.V	ókánéâ	"taste"			
CV.V.V.CV	liíòzré	"sit down"			
V.CV.CV.CV	éḃélélê	"expose"			

3. The tonal groups of the verbs

The verbs in Mokpe can be divided into two tonal groups: low and high.

a. Low tone verbs

Infinitive

lɪŋgbă	"to give"
liǰḃ	"to laugh"
lòkâ	"to play"
likòówá	"to fly"
likàmbówá	"to pour"

Isolated form

ɲgbâ	"give"
jòḃ	"laugh"
òkâ	"play"
kòówâ	"fly"
kàmbówâ	"pour"

b. High tone verbs

Infinitive		Isolated form	
likê	"to cut"	kê	"cut"
liŋwâ	"to die"	ŋwâ	"die"
lěnè	"to see"	énê	"see"
lăkà	"to pass"	ákâ	"pass"
lũŋwèlè	"to show"	úŋwélê	"show"
lǒŋgèlè	"to remember"	óŋgélê	"remember"
liβóngà	"to forget"	βóngâ	"forget"
lizríimà	"to pull"	zríimâ	"pull"
litíndèlè	"to push"	tíndélê	"push"
lizróŋgizrè	"to dry" (fish)	zróŋgíZRê	"dry" (fish)

The identification of a low-toned verb vs. a high-toned verb is possible thanks to the first tone of the verb root of the infinitive forms.

Low tone verbs		High tone verbs	
lijǎ	"to laugh"	lipkâ	"to fall"
lidzǎ	"to come"	lizrâ	"to dance"
limě	"to swallow"	likê	"to cut"

In the isolated forms, the first tone of the verbs permits their classification into the appropriate tone group even if the apparently monosyllabic low-toned verbs double their vowels in order to carry the original low tone of the verb and the falling tone of the imperative or isolated form.

Low tone verbs			High tone verbs		
Infinitive	Isolated form		Infinitive	Isolated form	
lijǎ	jǎǎ	"to laugh"	lipkâ	pkâ	"fall"
lidzǎ	dzǎǎ	"come"	lizrâ	zrâ	"dance"
limě	měě	"swallow"	likê	kê	"cut"

Disyllabic verbs are tonally unequivocal whether in the infinitive or isolated forms.

Low tone verbs			High tone verbs		
Infinitive	Isolated form		Infinitive	Isolated form	
likèká	kèkâ	"taste"	liwótò	wótô	"dress"
litèmbé	tèmbê	"leak"	litémè	témê	"stand up"
lizrùmá	zrùmâ	"bow"	liβángà	βángâ	"run"

In disyllabic vowel-initial roots, the rising contour tone on the first vowel of the root in high-toned verbs is in fact a combination of a low followed by a high. The low tone is that stranded tone of the vowel of the verb prefix, and the high tone is the tone of the verb root. One can see that this stranded low tone is no longer present in the isolated form.

High tone verbs				
	Infinitive		Isolated form	
lì-énè	→	lě̀nè "to see"	énê	"see"
lì-ákà	→	lǎ̀kà "to pass"	ákâ	"pass"
lì-úṙwélè	→	lǔṙwèlè "to show"	úṙwélê	"show"
lì-óṙgélè	→	lǒṙgèlè "to remember"	óṙgélê	"remember"

As for the low-toned verbs, the vowel /i/ of the verb prefix *lì-* gets deleted and its low tone merges with the one of the first vowel of the root.

Low tone verbs				
	Infinitive		Isolated form	
lì-ìḃé	→	liḃé "to cook"	ìḃê	"cook"
lì-òkà	→	lòkà "to play"	òkâ	"play"
lì-àgbá	→	làgbá "to climb"	àgbâ	"climb"
lì-àṙgbá	→	làṙgbá "to shoot"	àṙgbâ	"shoot"

4. Compound verbs

Some verbs are made up of two morphemes, generally a verb and a noun.

mbáki	"encouragement"	
lṙgbá mbáki	"to encourage"	(to give encouragement)
ḃòndzà	"permission"	
lṙgbá ḃòndzà	"to allow"	(give permission)
ḃèzràzrà	"whisper"	
lǒḃà ḃèzràzrà	"to whisper"	(to tell whisper)
dzóbì	"speech"	
lǒḃà dzóbì	"make a speech"	(to tell speech)

5. The subject and object (independent) pronouns

When conjugated, the verb is preceded by a subject pronoun (SP). It appears in two forms: a full or plain form before consonant-initial verbal roots and in a truncated or

modified form before vowel-initial roots. The verb root can also take an object or substitute pronoun (ObjP), which is placed between the TAM and the verb root.

Table 6. Subject and object pronouns

Subject pronouns				Object pronouns
Full form		Modified form		
All other tenses		Present perfect		
1sg	nà	ná	n-	ìmbâ
2sg	ò	ó	w-	wâ
3sg	à	á	—	môô
1pl	ì	í	dʒ-	íʒrô
2pl	è	é	j-	ínô
3pl	βá	βá	β-	wô

Thus, the SPs [nà] and [βá] lose their vowel when they precede vowel-initial roots. The vocalic SPs [ò], [ì] and [è] change to [w], [dʒ] and [j] respectively when occurring before roots beginning with vowels. The 3rd person singular pronoun [à] does not undergo any change.

As far as the tones are concerned, the SPs generally bear a low tone, except for the 3rd person plural which is high-toned. This is what is obtained in all tenses, except the present perfect tense which commands that the SPs bear a high tone all through (cf. table 6 above).

In the conjugated forms, after the deletion of the vowel of the subject pronoun, its tone survives and docks onto the vowel of the root to create a contour tone.

Full form				Truncated/modified form	
1sg	nà	kòòwà	"I fly"	němbà	"I sing"
2sg	ò	kòòwà	"you fly"	wěmbà	"you sing"
3sg	à	kòòwà	"he flies"	à émbà	"he sings"
1pl	ì	kòòwà	"we fly"	dʒěmbà	"we sing"
2pl	è	kòòwà	"you fly"	jěmbà	"you sing"
3pl	βá	kòòwà	"they fly"	βěmbà	"they sing"

The presentative is formed as follows:

ìmbâ	"it is me"
òwâ	"it is you"
mô	"it is him"

íẏrô	"it is us"
íẏnô	"it is us"
wô	"it is them"

It is negated with the negative marker *ẏrèkété* placed before the substitute pronoun.

ẏrèkété ìmbâ	"it is not me"
ẏrèkété òwâ	"it is not you"
ẏrèkété mô	"it is not him"
ẏrèkété íẏrô	"it is not us"
ẏrèkété íẏnô	"it is not you"
ẏrèkété wô	"it is not them"

In a verbal construction where the subject is a noun, the 3rd person singular and plural pronouns always follow and agree in class with that noun:

Ndive à ßéli ndí mòòkèlì

Ndive à ßéli ndí mò-òkèlì

PN 3sg.Cd Cop 1-player

"Ndive is a player"

Ndive nà Jozro ßá ßéli ndí ßàòkèlì

Ndive nà Jozro ßá ßéli ndí ßà-òkèlì

PN COORD PN 3pl.Cd Cop 2-player

"Ndive and Josso are players"

Èṅgbâ èmà lá èwúfà

è-ṅgbâ è- mà lá è-wúfà

7-dog 7.Cd PAST eat 7-fowl

"The dog ate the fowl"

Íṅgbâ ímà lá èwúfà

í-ṅgbâ í- mà lá è-wúfà

10-dog 10.Cd PAST eat 7-fowl

"The dogs ate the fowl"

Móòtówà mómà ṅmèẏré ṅmêlê

mó-òtówà mó mà ṅm- -èẏré ṅmêlê

3-car 3.Cd PAST ObjP knock yesterday

"The car knocked him yesterday"

Mé-òtówà mémà ñmèzré ñmêlê

mé-òtówà mé mà ñm- -èzré ñmêlê
4-car 4.Cd PAST ObjP knock yesterday

"The cars knocked him yesterday"

6. The indicative mood

(1) The defective verb *βéli* / *βé* "be"

Present

Positive

nà βéli ndí "I am"
ò βéli ndí "you are"
à βéli ndí "s/he is"
ì βéli ndí "we are"
è βéli ndí "you are"
βá βéli ndí "they are"

Negative

nà zrêndzé "I am not"
ò zrêndzé "you are not"
à zrêndzé "s/he is not"
ì zrêndzé "we are not"
è zrêndzé "you are not"
βá zrêndzé "they are not"

Past

Positive

nà mà βé "I was"
ò mà βé "you were"
à mà βé "s/he was"
ì mà βé "we were"
è mà βé "you were"
βá mà βé "they were"

Negative

nà zrí βê "I was not"
ò zrí βê "you were not"
à zrí βê "s/he was not"
ì zrí βê "we were not"
è zrí βê "you were not"
βá zrí βê "they were not"

Future

Positive

nà βê ndí "I shall be"
ò βê ndí "you will be"
à βê ndí "s/he will be"
ì βê ndí "we shall be"
è βê ndí "you will be"
βá βê ndí "they will be"

Negative

nà zrá 'βé "I shall not be"
ò zrá 'βé "you will not be"
à zrá 'βé "s/he will not be"
ì zrá 'βé "we shall not be"
è zrá 'βé "you will not be"
βá zrà βé "they will not be"

(2) The defective verb *lǒβà* "to have"

Present / Present continuous

Positive		Negative	
nǒβì	"I have"	nà zróβì	"I don't have / I haven't"
ò óβì	"you have"	ò zróβì	"you don't have / you haven't"
à óβì	"s/he has"	à zróβì	"s/he doesn't have / s/he hasn't"
dʒǒβì	"we have"	ì zróβì	"we don't have / we haven't"
jǒβì	"you have"	è zróβì	"you don't have / you haven't"
βóóβì	"they have"	βá zróβì	"they don't have / they haven't"

Past / Past continuous

Positive		Negative	
nà mòβá	"I had"	nà zróβè	"I didn't have / I hadn't"
ò mòβá	"you had"	ò zróβè	"you didn't have / you hadn't"
à mòβá	"s/he had"	à zróβè	"s/he didn't have / s/he hadn't"
ì mòβá	"we had"	ì zróβè	"we didn't have / we hadn't"
è mòβá	"you had"	è zróβè	"you didn't have / you hadn't"
βá mòβá	"they had"	βá zróβè	"they didn't have / they hadn't"

Future 1 (near)

Positive		Negative	
nǒβà	"I will have"	nà 'zróβá	"I will not have"
ò óβà	"you will have"	ò 'zróβá	"you will not have"
à óβà	"s/he will have"	à 'zróβá	"s/he will not have"
dʒǒβà	"we will have"	ì 'zróβá	"we will not have"
jǒβà	"you will have"	è 'zróβá	"you will not have"
βóóβà	"they will have"	βá zróβá	"they will not have"

Future 2 (far)

Positive		Negative	
nà βéné	"I will have"	nà zrá 'β'éné	"I will not have"
ò βéné	"you will have"	ò zrá 'βéné	"you w'll not have"
à βéné	"s/he will have"	à zrá 'βéné	"s/he will not have"
ì βéné	"we will have"	ì zrá 'βéné	"we will not have"
è βéné	"you will have"	è zrá 'βéné	"you will not have"
βá βéné	"they will have"	βá zrà βéné	"they will not have"

(3) Constructions with -óβì "have" (possession)

These constructions represent "have" in Mokpe. The infinitive form is *lǒβà* to "have" from the noun class prefix *lì-* and the root *-óβà*. Negation: *zrà óβì* → *zróβì*.

Positive	Negative
nǒβì wàná	nà zróβì wàná
"I have a mouth"	"I don't have a mouth"
ò óβì βàèní	ò zróβì βàèní
"you (sg) have guests"	"you don't have guests"
à óβì βálánà	à zróβì βálánà
"he has women"	"he doesn't have women"
dzǒβì múńánà	ì zróβì múńánà
"we have a man"	"we don't have a man"
jǒβì màlíwá	è zróβì màlíwá
"you (pl) have water"	"you (pl) don't have water"
wóóβì èwòlò	βá zróβì èwòlò
"they have work"	"they don't have work"
nǒβì βóndá	nà zróβì βóndá
"I have time"	"I don't have time"
nǒβì mààlì	nà zróβì mààlì
"I have money"	"I don't have money"
Kamarun à óβì ljǒmélá màmbówà	Kamarun à zróβì ljǒmélá màmbówà
"Cameroon has ten villages"	"Cameroon hasn't ten villages"
ékòmè jǒβì ljǒmélá màmbówà	ékòmè è zróβì ljǒmélá màmbówà
"the country has ten villages"	"the country hasn't ten villages"
lìnǒngè à óβì mbàngè à mèótówà	lìnǒngè à zróβì mbàngè à mèótówà
"Linonge has 20 cars"	"Linonge hasn't 20 cars"

(4) Obligation: to have + infinitive

Obligation is rendered through the morpheme *-ángáméné* followed by the infinitive form of the verb.

Present

Positive	Negative
nà ángáméné lǐnà	nà zrá'á ángàmènè lǎβà
"I have to urinate"	"I don't have to walk"
wàngáméné likùmbá	ò zrá'á ángàmènè lǐnà

"you have to beat (drum)"	"you don't have to urinate"
à áṅgáméné liḃáṅgà	à zrá'á áṅgàmènè litíndèlè
"s/he has to run"	"s/he don't have to push"
dzàṅgáméné lăḃà	ì zrá'á áṅgàmènè liḃáṅgà
"we have to walk"	"we don't have to run"
jàṅgáméné lijòó	è zrá'á áṅgàmènè lijòó
"you (pl) have to laugh"	"you (pl) don't have to laugh"
ḃá áṅgáméné litíndèlè	ḃá zrá áṅgàmènè likàwá
"they have to push"	"they don't have to divide"

Past

Positive

nà mà áṅgáméné lilâ
"I had to eat"
ò mà áṅgáméné lěmbà
"you had to sing"
à mà áṅgáméné liḃélè
"he had to call"
ì mà áṅgáméné lizrà
"we had to dance"
è mà áṅgáméné likánè
"you (pl) had to pray"
ḃá mà áṅgáméné liḃáṅgà
"they had to run"

Negative

nà zrá áṅgàmènè lilâ
"I did not have to eat"
ò zrá áṅgàmènè likánè
"you (sg) did not have to pray"
à zrá áṅgàmènè liḃélè
"s/he did not have to call"
ì zrá áṅgàmènè liliḃówá
"we did not have to open"
è zrá áṅgàmènè lilíṅgáná
"you (pl) did not have to love"
ḃá zrá áṅgàmènè lìṅgbă
"they did not have to give"

(5) Verb ending

The verbal ending in the infinitive form in Mokpe is generally the vowel [a]. However, some verbs end with [ɛ] and [ɔ].

a. Ending with /a/	b. Ending with /ɛ/ and /ɔ/
lilâ "to eat"	límě "to swallow"
lĩḃà "to still"	lě̀nè "to see"
lidză "to come"	lǎṅgèlè "to remember"
lipkâ "to fall"	liḃólè̀nè "to loose"
lěmbà "to sing"	lǎṅwè̀lè "to show"
lilùtėjá "to think"	lijǒ "to laugh"
lǒkòwà "to learn"	lǒkò "to wash"

lilibówá	"to open"	likòkó	"to pound"
lèlìngáná	"to like"	lìbòzró	"to choose"
liwùndúwà	"to untie"	linòngó	"to follow"

However, note that when the verb is conjugated the final is still [a], [ɛ] or [ɔ], but also the vowels [e] and [i] in certain moods or tenses for verbs whose final vowel is originally [a]. In fact there is the phenomenon of vowel mutation in the language. This is illustrated on the table below.

Table 7. The mutation of the vowel [a] to [e] and [i]

Infinitive	Imperative			Indicative	
	1sg	1pl	2pl	Past Neg.	Present Perfect Neg.
lilâ "to eat"	lâ eat!	î lé let us eat!	é lê you, eat!	nà zrí lê I did not eat	ò zrí lélí you (sg) have not eaten
lidzǎ "to come"	dzá come!	í dzě let us come!	é dzè you, come!	à zrí dzè he did not come	ì zrá dzèlì we have not come
lěmbà "to sing"	ěmbâ sing!	dzé jěmbé let us sing!	jěmbè you, sing!	è zré mbè you (pl) did not sing	βá zré mbí they have not sung
likòówá "to fly"	kòówà fly!	í kòówé let us fly!	é kòòwè you, fly!	nà zrí kòòwè I did not fly	ò zrí kòówí you (pl) have not flown

(6) The tenses

The conjugated verb is departed from the infinitive marker. For example, the verb *likê* "to cut" will be conjugated in the present, the past and present perfect tenses of the indicative mood as:

Present		Past (preterit)		Present Perfect	
nà kê	I cut	nà mà ké	I cut	ná 'máá kê	I have cut
ò kê	you cut	ò mà ké	you cut	ó 'máá kê	you have cut
à kê	s/he cuts	à mà ké	s/he cut	á 'máá kê	s/he has cut
ì kê	we cut	ì mà ké	we cut	í 'máá kê	we have cut
è kê	you cut	è mà ké	you cut	é 'máá kê	you have cut
βá kê	they cut	βá mà ké	they cut	βá 'máá kê	they have cut

The morphemes that enter the composition of conjugated verbs are the subject pronoun (SP), the tense-aspect-mood (TAM), the infinitive marker (IM), the negative

marker (Neg) and the verbal root (VR). The structure of a conjugated verb in the indicative mood, as we shall see below when discussing tenses, aspect and mood is then as follows:

Table 8. The structure of a conjugated verb in the indicative mood

Structure	Tense
1. SP + VR	Present, future
2. SP + TAM + VR	Past tense, Present perfect
3. SP + TAM + IM + VR	Present continuous, past continuous
4. SP + Neg + VR	Present, future, Past tense, Present perfect (Negation)
5. SP + Neg + TM + IM + VR	Present perfect continuous, past perfect continuous (Negation)

Note that the present and future tenses have zero markers. However, the future tense can be completed with a time adverb (underlined in the example below) in order to give the exact meaning.

nèndè <u>nmêlê</u>	"I will go tomorrow"
nèndè wózí <u>ḃàá</u>	"I will go in two days"
nèndè ô <u>ngbèndè</u>	"I will go in one month"

For the imperative mood, the structure for the affirmative is: (SP) + VR whereas the one for the negative form is: SP + NM + VR.

Table 9. The structure of a conjugated verb in the imperative mood

Structure	
1. SP + VR	Affirmative
2. SP + TM + VR	Negative

Example:

affirmative		negation	
lâ	"eat!"	ò zrí lá	"do not eat!"
îlé	"let us eat!"	ì zrí lá	"let us not eat!"
élê	"you (sg), eat!"	è zrí lá	"you (pl), do not eat! "

➤ Present simple

The affirmative form of the present tense is rendered with the zero morpheme. There is only the subject pronoun and the verbal root. The negative form of the present tense is done with the morpheme *zrà*.

Positive		Negative	
nà jò	"I laugh"	nà zrà 'lá	"I don't eat"
ò dʒà	"you come"	ò zrà jǒ	"you don't laugh"
à ɲgbà	"s/he gives"	à zrà 'lá	"s/he doesn't eat"
ì lùtèlì	"we think"	ì zrà lùtèlì	"we don't think"

➤ Present continuous

The positive form is done through the morpheme *βéli* followed by the verb at the infinitive mood. As for the negative form, it is done with *zrà* + the morpheme *èndʒé*, giving the contracted form *zréndʒé*, or with *zrà* + the morpheme *βéli*.

Positive		Negative	
ì βéli lilâ	"we're eating"	ì zréndʒé lilâ	"we're not eating"
è βéli lijǒ	"you're laughing"	ò zréndʒé lijǒ	"you're not laughing"
βá βéli lidʒă	"they're coming"	βá zrà βéli lidʒă	"they're not coming"

➤ Past simple

While the affirmative form is done with *mà*, the negative form uses *zrí*. Thus, *zrémbè* is a contracted form of *zrí* + *émbè*

Positive		Negative	
nà mèm̄bá	"I sang"	nà zrémbè	"I did not sing"
ò mà ké	"you cut"	ò zrí kê	"you did not cut"
à mà kòówá	"s/he flew"	à zrí kòòwè	"s/he did not fly"

➤ Past continuous

The affirmative and negative forms are rendered by *mà* and *zrí* respectively, and the morpheme *βé* marks continuity in the past.

Positive		Negative	
ì mà βé lěmbà	"we were singing"	ì zrí βé lěmbà	"we were not singing"
è mà βé likê	"you were cutting"	è zrí βé likê	"you were not cutting"
βá mà βé likòówá	"they were flying"	βá zrí βé likòówá	"they were not flying"

➤ Future

The future tense is not different from the present tense. Zero morpheme for the affirmative and *zrá* for the negative form.

Positive		Negative	
nà jò	"I will laugh"	nà zrá jǒ	"I will not laugh"
ò dzà	"you will come"	ò zrá dzǎ	"you will not come"
à émbà	"s/he will sing"	à zré mbá	"s/he will not sing"

Note however that the phrase can be completed with time adverbs to mark a more or less far future:

ò dzà /	wózí tâ /	ó wíki /	ó ngbèndè /	ó ñmâ
"you will come	in five days	in a week	in a month	in a year"

➤ Present Perfect

The present perfect is done with the morpheme *maa* whose tones vary according to the tonal shape of the verbal root and the tone of the subject pronoun. The negative form uses *zrí*.

Positive		Negative	
ná mǎá jò	"I have laughed"	nà zrí ǵjǒ	"I have not laughed"
ǒ mǎmbà	"you have sung"	ò zrémbí	"you have not sung"
á ǵmǎá kê	"s/he has cut"	à zrí ké	"s/he has not cut"
í mǎá kòòwà	"we have flown"	ì zrí kòówí	"we have not flown"
é ǵmǎá lùtèjà	"you have thought"	è zrí ǵlútélí	"you have not thought"

➤ Want (present) + Infinitive

To construct a sentence with “want” and a verb at the affirmative form (present tense), the verbal root *àzrà* is used with the verb at the infinitive form. In the past tense, it is either *àzréjé* or *mà àzrà*. Note that *àzrà/àzrà* or *àzréjé* are from *làzrà* “to want, to desire”.

a. Present: want + verb

nà àzrà lijǒ	"I want to laugh"
wà àzrà lidzǎ	"you want to come"
à àzrà lěmbà	"s/he wants to sing"
dzà àzrà likê	"we want to cut"
jà àzrà likòówá	"you want to fly"
ǵà àzrà likókò	"they want to think"

nà àzrà lilingáná	"I want to like"
βà àzrà liliβówá	"you want to open"

b. Past: wanted+verb

nà àzréjé lijǒ	"I wanted to laugh"
à àzréjé lěmbà	"s/he wanted to sing"
dzààzréjé likê	"we wanted to cut"

è mà àzrá likòówá	"you wanted to fly"
βá mà àzrá likókò	"they wanted to think"
nà mà àzrá lilingá	"I wanted to like"
ò mà àzrá liliβówá	"you wanted to open"
à mà àzrá lidzǎ	"s/he wanted to come"

➤ 'Impersonal' Verbal Forms

In the sense of Indo-European languages, impersonal verbal forms can be in two ways.

1) Using the word *mòtò* 'person' or *βàtò* 'people':

mòtò à lùtéli	"one thinks..."
βàtò à óβà émé	"one says that..."
βàtò βóβà émé	"people say that..."
βàtò βálùtèjà	"people think..."

2) Using *é* ... *ènèβè*. The structure is then:**Table 10.** The structure of Impersonal verb form

Structure		
1.	é + verbal root + <i>ènèβè</i>	affirmative
2.	é + zrá + verbal root + <i>ènèβè</i>	negative

Examples:

a. *lilùtèjá* "to think"

é lùtàènèβè	"it is thinkable"
é zrà lùtáénéβé	"it is unthinkable"
é zrèndzé nà ézrà lùtáénéβé	"it is not unthinkable"

b. lēmējà "to accept"

But:

é gbējàèñéβè	"it is acceptable"
é zrāgbèáénéβé	"it is unacceptable"
é zrèndzè nà ézrāgbèáénéβé	"it is not unacceptable"

c. lě̀nè "to see"

é zrènéβé	"it is not visible"
é zrèndzè nà ézrènéβé	"it is not invisible"

However, note the morphemic sequence is not always present:

a. lě̀nè "to see"

jě̀nējà	"it is visible"
é zrènéjá	"it is invisible"

b. étánê

éztánè	"it is possible"
éztánè	"it is not possible"
éztánè	"it is impossible"
éztàndzè nà éztánè	"it is not impossible"

Sometimes *é βéli* and *é zrèndzè* are used:

Positive		Negative	
é βéli wòlitó	"it is important"	é zrèndzè wòlitó	"it is not important"
é βéli díjà	"it is expensive"	é zrèndzè díjà	"it is not expensive"

7. The Imperative form

The meaning of the imperative is not different from what obtains in other Bantu languages. It expresses a strict order. In singular, it is identical to the infinitive form of the verb without the verbal prefix *li-*, and occurs without subject pronouns. The plural is marked by a systematic high tone on the subject pronouns. The tonal shape of the root is very unpredictable, depending on the structure of the verb.

Table 11. The structure of the Imperative verb

Infinitive	Imperative					
	affirmative			negative		
	1sg	1pl	2pl	1sg	1pl	2pl
lilá "to eat"	lá	îlé	élê	ò zri lá	ì zri lá	è zri lá
lijóó "to laugh"	Eat! jòó	Let us eat! íjòó	you, eat! éjò	Do not eat! ò zri jò	Let us not eat! ì zri jò	you, do not eat! è zri jò
lëmbà "to sing"	Laugh! ëmbà	Let us laugh! dzé jëmbé	you, laugh! jëmbè	Do not laugh! ò zré mbá	Let us not laugh! ì zré mbá	you, do not laugh! è zré mbá
liké "to cut"	Sing! kê	Let us sing! î ké	you, sing! é kê	Do not sing! ò zri ké	Let us not sing! ì zri ké	you, do not sing! è zri ké
lilijóowá "to open"	Cut! lijówà	Let us cut! í lijówé	you, cut! é lijówè	Do not cut! ò zri lijówá	Let us not cut! ì zri lijówá	you, do not cut! è zri lijówá
	Open! Open!	Let us open! Let us open!	you, open! you, open!	Do not open! Do not open!	Let us not open! Let us not open!	you, do not open! you, do not open!

8. The Hortative/Optative mood

The meaning here is calling somebody to act. The structure is the following:

íńá + subject pronoun (SP) + root (with vowel mutation for roots ending with /a/: i.e.: /a/ → [e]).

The examples comprise verbs of varied length and tone patterns. I also opposed the verbs ending with the vowel /a/ to those ending with the vowel /è/.

a. Roots ending with /a/	b. Roots ending with /è/
lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]	lěndé "to go" [ndê]
íńá némbè "let me sing"	íńá néndè "let me go"
íńá dzé ěmbé "let us sing"	íńá dzěndé "let us go"
íńá bémbè "let them sing"	íńá béndè "let them go"
lìbángà "to run" [bángâ]	lìbélè "to call" [bélê]
íńá ná bángè "let me run"	íńá ná bélé "let me call"
íńá î bángé "let us run"	íńá î bélé "let us call"
íńá bá bángè "let them run"	íńá bá bélé "let them call"
lě̀èjá "to cry" [èèjâ]	lìtíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
íńá néjè "let me cry"	íńá ná tíndèlè "let me push"
íńá dzějé "let us cry"	íńá î tíndélé "let us push"
íńá bėjè "let them cry"	íńá bá tíndèlè "let them push"

Note that there is an assimilation rule whereby the verbal pronoun is assimilated by the vowel of the preceding morpheme:

íńá á èndè	→	íńá èndè	"let him go"
íńá á gbèàné	→	íńá gbèàné	"let him use"
íńá í gbèáné	→	íńí gbèáné	"let us use"
íńá î tíndélé	→	íńá tíndélé	"let us push"

The negative form is done with either òzrìbèmé or òzrìjé.

a. Roots ending with /a/	b. Roots ending with /è/
lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]	lěndé "to go" [ndê]
òzrìbèmé / òzrìjé némbè	òzrìbèmé / òzrìjé néndè
"don't let me sing"	"don't let me go"
òzrìbèmé dzé / òzrìjé dzé ěmbé	òzrìbèmé / òzrìjé dzěndé
"don't let us sing"	"don't let us go"
òzrìbèmé / òzrìjé bémbè	òzrìbèmé / òzrìjé béndè
"don't let them sing"	"don't let them go"

liβáŋgà "to run" [βáŋgâ]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé ná βáŋgè
 "don't let me run"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé î βáŋgé
 "don't let us run"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βá βáŋgè
 "don't let them run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjâ]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé néjè
 "don't let me cry"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé dzêjé
 "don't let us cry"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βéjè
 "don't let them cry"

liβélè "to call" [βélê]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé ná βélè
 "don't let me call"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé î βélé
 "don't let us call"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βá βélè
 "don't let them call"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé ná tíndèlè
 "don't let me push"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé î tíndélé
 "don't let us push"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βá tíndèlè
 "don't let them push"

9. Subjunctive mood

It expresses an order given in a relatively polite form, as a request, it occurs in final and intentional sentences. Just like in the hortative mood, the verb roots ending with /a/ change that vowel in /e/.⁽¹⁰⁾

- Simple structure, positive:

SP + root (/a/ → [e])

Examples:

a. Roots ending with /a/
 lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]
 němbè⁽¹¹⁾ "I should sing"

lidzǎ "to come" [dʒá]
 ná dzè "I should come"

liβáŋgà "to run" [βáŋgâ]
 βá βáŋgè "they should run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjâ]
 Béjè⁽¹³⁾ "they should cry"

b. Roots ending with /è/
 lěndé "to go" [ndê]
 néndè⁽¹²⁾ "I should go"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
 î tíndélé "we should push"

liβélè "to call" [βélê]
 βá βélè "they should call"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
 βá tíndèlè "they should push"

➤ Simple structure, negative:

SP + *zrà/zrì* + root

Examples:

a. Roots ending with /a/

lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]

nà zřém¹bá "I should not sing"

lidzǎ "to come", dzǎ "go"

nà zrà dzǎ "I should not come"

liβǎngà "to run" [βǎngâ]

βá zřì βǎngá "they should not run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjâ]

βá zřèjá "they should not cry"

b. Roots ending with /è/

lěndé "to go" [ndê]

nà zřëndé "I shouldn't go"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]

ì zřì tíndélé "we should not push"

liβélé "to call" [βélê]

βá zřì βélé "they should not call"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]

βá zřì tíndèlè "they should not push"

Complex structure (i.e. with preclause), without the relative clause marker.

Present tense positive:

Preclause + SP + root (/a/ → [e])

Present tense negative:

Preclause + SP + *zřì* + root (no vowel change for roots ending with /a/)

The structure of the preclause is:

SP + *má* (say)

or

SP + *lùtéli* (think)

Examples:

Positive

à má ná lê

"s/he says I should eat"

à má ó lê

"s/he says you should eat"

à má á lê

"s/he says he should eat"

à lùtéli î lê

"s/he thinks we should eat"

à lùtéli é lê

Negative

à má nà zřì lá

"s/he says I should not eat"

à má ò zřì lá

"s/he says you should not eat"

à má à zřì lá

"s/he says he should not eat"

à lùtéli ì zřì lá

"s/he thinks we should not eat"

à lùtéli è zřì lá

"s/he thinks you should eat"

à lùtéli βá lê

"s/he thinks they should eat"

lõfà

lilâ

"s/he thinks you should not eat"

à lùtéli βá zrí lá

"s/he thinks they should not eat"

"to say"

"to eat"

Complex structure (i.e. with preclause), with the relative clause marker.

Present tense positive:

Preclause + *náěmá* + SP + root (/a/ → [e])

Present tense negative:

preclause + *náěmá* + SP + *zrí* + root (no vowel change for roots ending with /a/)

The structure of the preclause does not change.

Examples:

Positive

à má náěmá ná lê

"s/he says that I should eat"

à má náěmá ó lê

"s/he says that you should eat"

à má náěmá á lê

"s/he says that he should eat"

à lùtéli náěmá î lê

"s/he thinks that we should eat"

à lùtéli náěmá é lê

"s/he thinks that you should eat"

à lùtéli náěmá βá lê

"s/he thinks that they should eat"

náěmá

Negative

à má náěmá nà zrí lá

"s/he says that I should not eat"

à má náěmá ò zrí lá

"s/he says that you should not eat"

à má náěmá à zrá 'lá

"s/he says that he should not eat"

à lùtéli náěmá ì zrí lá

"s/he thinks that we should not eat"

à lùtéli náěmá è zrí lá

"s/he thinks that you should not eat"

à lùtéli náěmá βá zrí lá

"s/he thinks that they should not eat"

"that"

Note that the inflection of all the persons of the preclause does not change the structure of the subjunctive.

Positive

ì má ná lê

"I say I should eat"

ò má ó lê

"you say you should eat"

Negative

nà má nà zrí lá

"I says I should not eat"

ò má ò zrí lá

"you (sg) says you should not eat"

à má á lê	à má à zrì lá
"s/he says he should eat"	"s/he says he should not eat"
ì lùtéli î lé	ì lùtéli ì zrì lá
"we lùtéli we should eat"	"we think we should not eat"
è má é lê	è lùtéli è zrì lá
"you lùtéli you should eat"	"you (pl) think you should not eat"
βá má βá lê	βá lùtéli βá zrì lá
"they say they should eat"	"they think they should not eat"

The use of the preclause in the past adds the past morpheme to the structure. The subjunctive clause does not change. Also note that instead of the verb *má* (> *límà* "say") which was heavily used in the present tense, it is the verb *-òφά* (> *lǒφà* "say") which is used in the past. The structure of the preclause in the past is therefore:

SP + *mà* + *-òφά* (say)

or

SP + *mà* + *lùtéli* (think)

Examples:

Positive

nà mòφά náěmá némbè
 "I said I should sing"
 ò mòφά náěmá néndè
 "you said I should go"
 à mòφά náěmá ná dzè
 "s/he said I should come"
 ì mà lùtéjá náěmá î lé
 "we thought we should eat"
 è mà lùtéjá náěmá é lê
 "you thought you should eat"
 βá mà lùtéjá náěmá βá lê
 "they thought they should eat"

Negative

à mòφâ náěmá nà zrì lá
 "s/he said I should not eat"
 à mòφâ náěmá ò zrì lá
 "s/he said you should not eat"
 à mòφâ náěmá à zrá 'lá
 "s/he said he should not eat"
 à mà lùtéjâ náěmá ì zrì lá
 "s/he thought we should not eat"
 à mà lùtéjâ náěmá è zrì lá
 "s/he thought you should not eat"
 à mà lùtéjâ náěmá βá zrì lá
 "s/he thought they should not eat"

10. Conditional mood

(1) Conditional 1

Conditional 1 or "real" conditional is formed with a will verb in the result clause and the present tense in the if-clause (*jéténá* "if").

Examples:

► Result clause positive + *jèténá*-clause positive

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. | à lâ jèténá ò dzéli | "s/he will eat if you come" |
| | βá lâ jèténá βá dz'éli | "they will eat if they come" |
| b. | némbà jèténá à jémbì | "I will sing if she sings" |
| c. | ì lâ jèténá wèndî | "we will eat if you go" |
| d. | nà lâ jèténá wiβê | "I will eat if you cook" |
| | ò lâ jèténá mólánà àmì à jìβê | "you will eat if my wife cooks" |
| | ò lâ jèténá niβê | "you will eat if I cook" |

Note the complete change of the morphological structure of the verb *lidzǎ* "to come", *dzàà* "come" which realized *dzéli*, and the ending the verbs *lěmbà* "to sing", *ěmbà* "sing" and *lèndé* "to go", *èndé* "go" which ends in a vowel /i/, i.e. *jémbì* and *wèndî* respectively. The verb *liβé* "to cook", [*βé*] "cook" would certainly also end with the vowel /i/. However, we don't have **wiβî* probably because the sequence /β/ + /i/ may not be a preferred sequence in the language. The appearance of the vowel /i/ at the end of certain forms is not strange. As rightly put by Deen (2001: 42):

[...]. Mood is marked as a suffix, and is always the final vowel in the verbal complex. This final vowel alternates three ways between the indicative [a], the subjunctive [e] and the negative [i].

Although the /i/ is not in the negative form in Mokpe, it confirms Deen's observation of a vowel /i/ being part of the vowel making mood in Bantu.

► Result clause negative + *jèténá*-clause positive

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|--|
| a. | à zrá 'lá jèténá ò dzéli | "s/he will not eat if you come" |
| | βá zrà lá jèténá βá dz'éli | "they will not eat if they come" |
| | nà zrèndè jèténá à dzéli | "I will not go if she comes" |
| b. | nà zrémbà 'lá jèténá à jémbì | "I will not sing if she sings" |
| c. | ì zrá 'lá jèténá wèndî | "we will not eat if you go" |
| | nà zrá dzǎ jèténá à èndî | "I will not come if she goes" |
| d. | ò zrá 'lá jèténá niβê | "you (pl) will not eat if I cook" |
| | nà zrá 'lá jèténá wiβê | "I will not eat if you cook" |
| | ò zrá 'lá jèténá mólánà àmì à jìβê | "you (sg) will not eat if my wife cooks" |

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause negative

nà lâ jêtená nà zrá 'wúzrèlì	"I will eat if I am not sound"
ò lâ jêtená bá zrí wǒngízárené	"you will eat if they are not ready"
à lâ jêtená bá zrá lǐngàni	"s/he will eat if they don't want"
ì lâ jêtená ò zrá lǐngàni	"we will eat if you don't want"
bá lâ jêtená ó zréndzé mààlì	"they will eat if there is no money"

► Result clause negative + *jêtená*-clause negative (i.e. with *jêtená*)

bá zrá bǎngá jêtená nà zrá 'wúzrèlì	"they will not run if I am not sound"
bá zrémbá jêtená bá zrí wǒngízárené	"they will not sing if they are not ready"
bá zréjá jêtená bá zrá lǐngàni	"they will not cry if they don't want"
ì zrá làtá jêtená ò zrá lǐngàni	"we will not unite if you don't want"
à zríbé jêtená ó zréndzé mààlì	"s/he will not cook if there is no money"
nà zráandá jêtená nà zróbì mààlì	"I will not buy if I don't have money"
è zráagbá jêtená èzróbì ngínà	"you (pl) will not climb if you don't have power"

(2) Conditional 2 ("unreal" conditional)

The simple form or present conditional (positive) of Conditional 2 with or without the *jêtená*-clause is made of the subject pronoun followed by the morpheme *ô* and the verb root.

SP + <i>ô</i> + verb root + (<i>jêtená</i> -clause)
--

The negation is done with *zrí*.

SP + <i>zrí</i> + <i>ô</i> + verb root + (<i>jêtená</i> -clause)

Examples without *jêtená*-clause:

Positive		Negative	
nô lâ	"I would eat"	nà zró lá	"I would not eat"
ò ô lâ	"you would eat"	ò zró lá	"you would not eat"
à ô lâ	"he would eat"	à zró lá	"s/he would not eat"
dzò ô lâ	"we would eat"	ì zró lá	"we would not eat"
jò ô lâ	"you would eat"	è zró lá	"you would not eat"
bo ô lâ	"they would eat"	bá zró lá	"they would not eat"

Examples with *jêtená*-clause:

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause positive

nô lâ jêtená wiβê	"I would eat if you cook"
ò ô lâ jêtená mólàná àmi à iβê	"you would eat if my wife cooks"
à ô lâ jêtená ò dzéli	"s/he would eat if you come"
dzò ô lâ jêtená wëndí	"we would eat if you go"
jò ô lâ jêtená niβê	"you would eat if I cook"
βó ò lâ jêtená βá 'dzéli	"they would eat if they come"

► Result clause negative + *jêtená*-clause positive

nà zrô lá jêtená wiβê	"I would not eat if you cook"
ò zrô lá jêtená mólàná àmi à iβê	"you would not eat if my wife cooks"
à zrô lá jêtená ò dzéli	"s/he would not eat if you come"
ì zrô lá jêtená wëndí	"we would not eat if you go"
è zrô lá jêtená niβê	"you would not eat if I cook"
βá zrô lá jêtená βá 'dzéli	"they would not eat if they come"

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause negative

nô lâ jêtená nà zrá wözrèli	"I would eat if I am not sound"
ò ô lâ jêtená βá zrí wöngízáré	"you would eat if they are not ready"
à ô lâ jêtená βá zrá àzrá	"s/he would eat if they don't want"
dzò ô lâ jêtená ò zrá àzrá	"we would eat if you don't want"
jò ô lâ jêtená ó zrèngété mòní	"you (pl) would eat if there is no money"
jò ô lâ jêtená é zriβé mòní	"you (pl) would eat if there is no money"
jò ô lâ tò è zriβé mòní	"you (pl) would eat if there is no money"
βó ò lâ jêtená βá zrá tójí	"they would eat if they don't quarrel"

► Result clause negative + *jêtená*-clause negative (i.e. with *jêtená*)

nà zrô lá jêtená nà zrá wözrèli	"I would not eat if I am not sound"
ò zrô lá jêtená βá zrí wöngízáré	"you would not eat if they are not ready"
à zrô lá jêtená βá zrá àzrá	"s/he would not eat if they don't want"
ì zrô lá jêtená ò zrá àzrá	"we would not eat if you don't want"
è zrô lá jêtená é zriβé mòní	"you (pl) not would eat if there is no money"
βá zrô lá jêtená βá zrá tójí	"they not would eat if they don't quarrel"

Note that the *jêtená*-clause can equally be in the past.

nô lâ jêtená ò mißé	"I would eat if you cooked"
ò ô lâ jêtená mólàná àmi à mißé	"you would eat if my wife cooked"
à ô lâ jêtená ò mà dzàá	"s/he would eat if you came"

As for the composed form or simple past conditional, without the if-clause, is done with the verbal morpheme *ò má* at the beginning of the utterance. The morpheme *mà* between the subject pronoun and the root is the past tense marker.

ò má + SP + *mà* + verb root + (*jêtená*-clause)

The meaning of the sequential morpheme *ò má* is not yet clear. What is certain for now is that it comes exclusively with the composed form. It can therefore be considered as the "real" conditional marker. While in the positive form there is no vowel change, the negation is done with *zrí* and a change of quality in the root vowel.

ò má + SP + *zrí* + verb root (/a/ → [e]) + *jêtená*-clause

Examples: simple past conditional without the *jêtená*-clause

Positive	Negative
a. ò má nà mà lá "I would have eaten"	ò má nà zrí lê "I would not have eaten"
ò má nà mà gbèáná "I would have used"	ò má nà zrí gbèàné "I would not have used"
ò má nà mèmá "I would have sung"	ò má nà zrémbè "I would not have sung"
b. ò má ò mà káné "you would have prayed"	ò má ò zrí kánè "you would not have prayed"
ò má à mèndé "s/he would have gone "	ò má à zréndè "s/he would have gone "

Examples: simple past conditional with the *jêtená*-clause

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause positive (i.e. with *jêtená*).

a. ò má nà mà lá jêtená à mißé	"I would have eaten if she cooked"
ò má nà mèmá jêtená à mèmá	"I would have sung if she sang"
ò má à mà kàwá jêtená à mà lɪŋgáná té	"s/he would have divided if she wanted"
b. ò má nà màßélé jêtená à mà dză	"I would have called if she came"

ò má ò mà kánè jèténá à mà nùngbǎ	"you would have prayed if she
èkáàti jà màkánè	gave me the prayer book"
ò má à mëndé jèténá à mà dzǎ	"s/he would have gone if she
	came"
ò má ì mà ké jèténá à mà lɪngáná	"we would have cut if she
	wanted"

► Result clause negative + *jèténá*-clause positive

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| a. | ò má nà zrí lê jèténá à miβé | "I would not have eaten if she cooked" |
| | ò má nà zrémbè jèténá à mèmǎ | "I would not have sung if she sang" |
| | ò má à zrí kàwè jèténá à mà lɪngáná | "s/he would not have divided if she wanted" |
| b. | ò má nà zrá βélè jèténá à mà dzǎ | "I would not have called if she came" |
| | ò má ò zrí kánè jèténá à mà nùngbǎ èkáàti jà màkánè | "you would not have prayed if she gave me the prayer book" |
| | ò má à zréndè jèténá à mà dzǎ | "s/he would not have gone if she came" |
| | ò má ì zrí jèténá à mà lɪngáná | "we would not have cut if she wanted" |

(3) Conditional 3

Conditional 3, often called "past conditional" uses the same morphemes as the simple past of conditional 2. The difference between the two lies in the conditional 3 deals with past situations with hypothetical results.

► Result clause negative + *jèténá*-clause negative

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| a. | ò má nà zrí lê jèténá à zríβè | "I would not have eaten if she had not cooked" |
| | ò má nà zrémbè jèténá à zrémbè | "I would not have sung if she had not sung" |
| | ò má à zrí kàwè jèténá à zrí lɪngànè | "s/he would not have divided if she had not wanted" |
| b. | ò má nà zrá βélè jèténá à zrí dzè | "I would not have called if she had not come" |
| | ò má ò zrí kánè jèténá à zrí nùngbè èkáàti jà màkánè | "you would not have prayed if she had not given the prayer book" |

ò má à zréndè jéténá à zrí dzè "s/he would not have gone if she had not come"

ò má ì zrí kê jéténá à zrí lɪŋgàné "we would not have cut if she wanted"

► Result clause positive + *jéténá*-clause negative

- a. ò má nà mà lá jéténá à zríβè "I would have eaten if she had not cooked"
- ò má nà mèmá jéténá à zrémbè "I would have sung if she had not sung"
- ò má à mà kàwá jéténá à zrí lɪŋgàné "s/he would have divided if she had not wanted"
- b. ò má nà mà βélé jéténá à zrí dzè "I would have called if she had not come"
- ò má ò mà káné jéténá à zrí nùŋgbè "you would have prayed if she had not given the prayer book"
- ò má à mèndé jéténá à zrí dzè "s/he would have gone if she had not come"
- ò má ì mà ké kê jéténá à zrí lɪŋgàné "we would have cut if she wanted"

11. Infinitive phrases

Infinitive phrases are formed using the preposition *ó* preceding the infinitive form of the verb.

ó l-ǒŋwà m̀ò-tò ó l̀ì-làkízá lǒβè
 PREP 5-kill 1-man PREP 5-forgive God
 "to kill is human, to forgive is from God."

ó l̀ì-kê l-á βè-èjé lí-dzàná è-tùmbà-tùmbà
 PREP 5-cut 5-Cd 8-tree 5-bring 7-heat
 "to cut the trees will bring heat."

ó l̀ì-zrà dzòódzòó é-dzàná l̀ìtê
 PREP 5-dance too much 7-make tired
 "to dance too much makes tired."

12. Gerund

When in the middle of the utterance, the gerund is the form of the verb in isolation, without modification.

lilâ "eat"

nà zrá lɪŋgàni lì-lâ dʒòó dʒòó

1sg Neg love 5-eat much

"I don't like eating a lot."

lòká "play"

ì lɪŋgàni lòká football

1pl love 5-play 9.football

"We enjoy playing football."

However, when at sentence-initial, the low tone of the prefix is replaced by a high tone.

likê "to cut"

lí-kê l-á bè-èjé lí-dʒàná è-tùmbà-tùmbà

5-cut 5-Cd 8-tree 5-bring 7-heat

"Cutting the trees will bring heat."

lìzrà "to dance"

lí-zrà l-á dʒòódʒòó lí-βéli lìòtê

5-dance 5-Cd too much 5-COP tired

"Dancing too much makes tired."

2. Verbal Derivation

In Mokpe, some of verb meanings can be obtained through derivations, i.e. the combination of the verb root with a morpheme to form new words. Suffixation is very productive.

1. Applicative/Benefactive

The applicative/benefactive is marked with the toneless suffix *-eja* or *-ea* (the variant *-ea* was recorded by Kagaya 1992a) which replaces the last vowel of the verb root and copies its tone.

- a. *-èjà*: the last vowel of the root ends with a low tone

lɪŋwâ ŋwâ

liṅwéèjà	"die for ..."
litémè	"to stand, fight"
litémèjà	"to stand, to fight for (sb)"
liwówà	"to take"
liwówèjà	"take for ..."
lěmbà	"to sing"
lěmbèjà	"sing for ..."
lǒṅgò	"to look at, watch"
lǒṅgèjà	"to watch over"

b. -*éjà*: the last vowel of the root ends with a high tone

liḡbèá	"to work"
liḡbèéjà	"work for ..."
làndá	"to buy"
làndéjà	"to buy (sth) for (sb)"
lèndé	"to go", "to walk"
lèndéjà	"to go to" "to walk for"
lànná	"to fight"
lànnéjà	"to defend, fight for sb"
lòṅgá	"to grow"
lòṅgéjà	"to look after" (a child)

2. *Comitative / Associative*

Comitative actions are expressed with the toneless suffix *-na* which copies the tone of the final vowel. The vowel /a/ of this suffix can be realised /ɔ/ if the final vowel of the verb root is /ɔ/ and as [ɛ] if the final vowel of the root is /ɛ/.

a. Verb roots ending in a low-toned vowel

liṅwâ	"to die"
liṅwânà	"to die with ..."
likákà	"to tie"
likákànà	"to tie with..."
liṅô	"to drink"
liṅônò	"to drink with..."
likúlè	"to finish"
likúlènè	"to finish with..."

b. Verb roots ending in a high-toned vowel

làgbá	"to climb"
làgbáná	"to climb with..."
linàngá	"to sleep"
linàngáná	"to sleep with..."
lijǒ	"to laugh"
lijǒnó	"to laugh with..."
lèndé	"to go"
lèndéné	"to go with..."

3. Associative reciprocal

Associative reciprocal is done with two morphemes: the infix *-àá-* and the suffix *-ě*. The infix *-àá-* replaces the vowel /i/ of the verb prefix *lì-* whereas the suffix *-ě* replaces, in the unmarked case, the final vowel of the root. Furthermore, the infix *-àá-* is realised *-àǒ-* when the root starts with the vowel /ɔ/, /o/ or /u/, by virtue of a height assimilation process. In other words, the infix *-àá-* is found exclusively in consonant-initial roots.

a. *-àá-* in consonant-initial roots + suffix *-ě*

litùná	"to cure, treat"
làátùně	"to cure each other"
likákà	"to tie, to bind"
làákákě	"to tie each other"
lilingáná	"to like, to love"
làálingàně	"to like, love each other"
likókò	"to stretch sth"
làákókě	"to stretch each other"
lilingèlè	"to coil"
làálingě	"to coil each other"
likúmènè	"to cover" (with a lid)
làákùmèně	"to cover each other"

b. *-àá-* → *-àǒ-* in vowel-initial roots + suffix *-ě*

lǒkizrè	"to injure (sb)"
làǒkizrě	"to injure each other"
lǒngò	"to look at, to watch"
làǒngòně	"to look at each other"
lǒkànèà	"to listen"

làókànéłě	"to listen to each other"
lùŋmá	"to meet"
làók'ŋmáně	"to meet each other"

In some cases, the last vowel does not delete and instead of a replacement, there is simply addition of the suffix -ě onto the root. Then, the epenthetic consonant /n/ is inserted to break the hiatus.

lǒŋgò	"to look at, to watch"
làók'ŋgòně	"to look at each other"
lùŋmá	"to meet"
làók'ŋmáně	"to meet each other"
litê	"to shout"
làátêně	"to shout at each other"

Similarly, when the verb root ends with two vowels and the last is substituted with the suffix -ě, the epenthetic consonant /l/ is inserted to separate the two final vowels.

litémèà	"to defend sb"
làátémèłě	"to defend each other"
lǒkànèà	"to listen"
làókànéłě	"to listen to each other"

4. Causative

The causative is marked through the suffixation of the toneless morpheme *-izrè* (the variant *-izre* was recorded by Kagaya 1992a). This morpheme replaces the last vowel of the verb root, and will take a low, a high or a falling contour tone on both vowels depending on the tone of the last vowel of the root.

- a. *-izrè*: the last vowel of the root ends with a low tone
- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| lǒkòwà | "to learn" |
| lǒkòwìzrè | "to teach (cause sb to learn)" |
| likákà | "to tie" |
| likákìzrè | "to make tie" |
| litówò | "to quarrel" |
| litówìzrè | "to cause sb to quarrel" |
| lìzrángà | "to clean" |
| lìzrángìzrè | "to make clean" |

b. *-íẓré*: the last vowel of the root ends with a high tone

lìẓrèéá	"to repair, fix, arrange"
lìẓrèíẓré	"to make repair"
lìtítá	"to wet"
lìtítíẓré	"to make wet"
lìjìngá	"to shake"
lìjìngíẓré	"to make shake"
làndá	"to buy"
làndíẓré	"to cause sb to buy"

c. *-íẓrè*: the last vowel of the root ends with a falling contour tone

lìlâ	"to eat"
lìlízrè	"to feed, give food"
lìkpâ	"to fall"
lìkpízrè	"to make fall"

Sometimes, the last vowel of the root does not get deleted, and the tone of the causative marker is the copy of the last tone of the undeleted vowel. Interestingly, the tonal melody of the last vowel is maintained in the causative form.

likô	"to become dirty"
likóíẓrè	"to make dirty"
lìjǒ	"to laugh"
lìjòíẓré	"to cause sb to laugh"

5. *Reflexive verbs*

Reflexivity on the verb is marked by the insertion of the high-toned morpheme /á/ between the TAM marker and the verb root. This insertion triggers the change of the final vowel /a/ to /ɛ/ for the verb roots ending with /a/, but there is no change when the verb root already ends with vowel /ɛ/. Tonally, the verb root must bear high melody irrespective of the original tone melody and the number of syllables. This high melody is systematically lowered by the presence of the high tone of the reflexive morpheme /á/ by virtue of Meeussen's rule. Finally, the meaning of verb can be completed with the addition of the reflexive pronoun in final position.

a. Consonant-initial roots

ò màá ¹ tí ¹ jé (wítí)	lìtíjâ / tíjâ	"you slapped yourself"
nà màá ¹ dzá ¹ né (mbítí)	lìdžàná / džàná	"I brought myself"
à màá ¹ zró ¹ rzé (mbítí)	lìzròzrà / zròzrà	"I washed myself"

nà màá 'ké'é (mbítí)	likê / likê	"I cut myself"
à màá 'tè'mbé (ɲmítí)	litèmbé / tèmbê	"s/he leaked himself"
à màá tín'dé'lé (ɲmítí)	litíndèlè / tíndélê	"s/he pushed himself"

When the root starts with a vowel, the reflexive morpheme /á/ drops, but transfers its high tone to the first vowel of the root, and Meessen's rule still applies.

b. Vowel-initial roots

nà mà ó'ngó'wá'né mbítí	lǒngwàná / óngwánâ	"I helped myself"
nà mà ó'ɲwé mbítí	lǒɲwà / óɲwâ	"I killed myself"
ò mà ó'kí'zré wítí	lǒkà / ókâ	"you hurt yourself"
nà mà ó'kí'zré mbítí	lǒkà / ókâ	"I hurt myself"
nà mà á'ndé mbítí	lándá / àndâ	"I bought myself"
à mà á'βá'né (ɲmítí)	lǎβànè / áβánê	"s/he hung himself"
nà mà ók'í'zré mbítí	lǒkí'zré / ókí'zrê	"I washed myself"

When the sentence is in the present tense and consequently no overt TAM marker, the reflexive marker is placed between the subject marker and verb.

nàá 'lú'wé (mbítí)	lilùwá / lùwâ	"I find myself"
wàá 'lú'wé (wítí)		"you find yourself"
àá 'lú'wé (ɲmítí)		"s/he finds himself"
dʒàá 'língánê (ìzró wítí)	lilingáná / língánâ	"we love ourselves"
jàá 'língánê (ìjón wítí)		"you love yourselves"
βàá 'língánê (wó wítí)		"they love themselves"

6. Relationship

Relationship is expressed through the suffixation of the toneless morpheme -ɛɛ which copies the tone of the last vowel of the root. Since there is no final vowel replacement, an epenthetic consonant, /l/ or /n/ is inserted between the final vowel and the suffix. The consonant /n/ is inserted when the vowel sequence is /àè/ (i.e. /àè/ → [ànè]) and /l/ is inserted when the sequence is /èè/ (i.e. èè → èlè).

a. Verb roots ending in a low-toned vowel

lìfángà	"to spoil"
lìfángànèlè	"to spoil around, to spoil people, to ferment"
lìzràènè	"to sign"
lìzràènèlèlè	"sign (something for somebody)"
lǔɲmà	"to come"
lǔɲmèlèlè	"to come from (somewhere)"

b. Verb roots ending in a high-toned vowel

liφiá	"to mix"
liφiáné	"to mix sth with sth, put together"
lùnmá	"to meet"
lùnmáné	"to meet with person, in a place"
lirzàngá	"to assemble"
lirzàngáné	"to bring together (people)"
làβizré	"to sell"
làβizrélé	"sell (something to somebody)"

7. *Process through predicate past participle*

The toneless suffix *-ea* marks process or inchoative state. It replaces the final vowel and copies the tone of the latter.

a. Verb roots ending in a low-toned vowel

liφàngà	"to spoil"
liφàngèà	"to become spoiled"
liwókà	"to dislocate"
liwókèà	"to become dislocated"
likándà	"to crack"
likándèà	"to become cracked"
lǔnmà	"to come"
lǔnmèà	"to be from"
liwéndè	"to snap"
liwéndèà	"to become snapped"

b. Verb roots ending in a high-toned vowel

lèndé	"to go, walk"
lèndéá	"to go to"
làndá	"to buy"
làndéá	"to be bought"
linàngá	"to sleep"
linàngéá	"to sleep out, for"
liβúndúwá	"to loosen"
liβúndúwéá	"to become loosen"

8. *Neutro-passive*

The neutro-passive or passive without agent is rendered by *-βά*, *-βέ* and *-βό* depending on the last vowel of the verb root. When the last vowel of the verb root is any vowel except /ε/ and /ο/, the morpheme is *-βά*. When the last vowel is /ε/ or /ο/ the variants *-βέ* or *-βό* are used respectively.

lǒφà	"to kill"
lǒφàβà	"to be killed"
lijà	"to bear" (a child)
lijààβà	"to be born"
liŋgbǎ	"to give"
liŋgbàáβá	"to be given"
likákà	"to tie"
likákàβà	"to be tied"
lizrèéá	"to repair, fix, arrange"
lizrèáβá	"to be repaired" (by sb)
liφàné	"to hang" (generic)
liφànéβέ	"to be suspended"
liténènè	"to straighten"
liténèβè	"to be straightened"
lilímizrè	"to extinguish"
lilímizrèβè	"to be extinguished"
lòndzó	"to deceive"
lòndzóβó	"to be deceived" (by sb)
linòtó	"to twist"
linòtóβó	"to be twisted"

Examples:

a. *βά*

mó'léli mò mà láβá	cl. 3	"the food was eaten"
mí'léli mí mà láβá	cl. 4	"the foods were eaten"
líβáŋgi lì mà wínáβá	cl. 5	"the race was won"
máǎŋgòlà má mà láβá	cl. 6	"the mangoes were eaten"
étò é mà láβá	cl. 7	"the rat was eaten"
βéwòló βé mà gbèáβá	cl. 8	"the works were done"
ímbòó í mà ŋgbǎβá	cl.10	"the bananas were given"

ínòní í mòngwáβá	cl. 13	"the bird was killed"
wóǎlò wó mà àndáβá	cl. 14	"the canoe was bought"
<i>b. βé</i>		
mǎǎnè mó mònáβé	cl. 3	"the land was cultivated"
méǎǎnè mé mònáβé	cl. 4	"the lands were cultivated"
líǎǎ lí mà βéléβé	cl. 5	"the name was called"
ézrù é mà tíndéléβé	cl. 7	"the wall was pushed"
éèjé é mà kééβé	cl. 7	"the tree was cut"
ímbóli í mà βízréβé	cl. 10	"the goats were cut"
wóǎmbó wó mà lǐngáβé	cl. 14	"the sugar was liked by us"
<i>c. βó</i>		
è mólánà à mòngǎǎβó	cl. 1	"the woman was seen"
βátò βá mà βòzróβó	cl. 2	"the people were chosen"
è mòlí mó mǎndǎǎβó	cl. 3	"the mountain was descended"
máidǎǎ má mà ǎǎβó	cl. 5	"the blood was drunk"
èbíá è mà ǎǎβó	cl. 9	"the bier was drunk"
ínòní í mǎkǎǎβó	cl. 13	"the bird was washed"
wóǎlò wó mà tózróβó	cl. 14	"the canoe was touched"

9. Morpheme stacking

It is possible to stack morphemes.

Causative + relationship

litimbá	"to return"
litimb-ízá	"to return sth, (money)", "to change, to substitute"
timb-ízá-l-élé	"to reply, exchange"
lǐfǎng-à	"to spoil"
lǐfǎngà-l-èlè	"to ferment"
lǐfǎng-ízá-l-èlè	"to make ferment"

Causative + comitative

lǐǐng-á	"to shake"
lǐǐng-ízá	"to make sth shake"
lǐǐng-ízá-né	"to shake strongly or to shake with ..."

10. Summary

Table 12. Mokpe verb derivational morphemes

Derivational event	Morpheme	Behaviour	Tone	Remarks
Applicative/Benefactive	-eja or -ea	Replaces FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	-ea (Kagaya 1992a) na → nɔ/ ɔ#— na → nɛ/ ɛ#—
Applicative/comitative	-na	Adds to FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	
Associative reciprocal	-áá- ... -ě	Infix: placed between VPr & VR. Suffix: replaces FV of VR	Fixed L-H tone sequence for both infix and suffix	-áá- → -á- / 1 — á, o or u Insertion of epenthetic l, n between FV & suffix -ě
Causative	-izre	Replaces or adds to FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	-izre (Kagaya 1992a)
Reflexive verbs	-á-	Placed between TAM & VR	Fixed high tone	FV /-a/ changes to /ě/ Optional use of RP (refl pron)
Relationship	-ɛɛ	Adds to FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	Insertion of epenthetic /l/, /n/ between FV & suffix
Predicative Past participle (Process)	-ea	Replaces FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	
Neutro-passive	-βá (~βě~βá)	Adds to FV of VR	Fixed high tone	βá → βá/ ɔ#— βá → βě/ ɛ#—

3. The Verb Phrase

There exist in Mokpe some morpheme used to specify the verbal action with regard to its phases, manner or quantity.

1. Marking of phase of action

(1) Durative

➤ *téjà bódá* or *ô bódá* "meantime"

téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà lá	"In the meantime, he ate"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà dʒàá	"In the meantime, he came"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà wówá	"In the meantime, he took"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mëndé	"In the meantime, he went"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà tındélé	"In the meantime, he pushed"

➤ *ólămbèlè* or *ndí* "meanwhile"

ólămbèlè / ndí à mà lá	"meanwhile, he ate"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mà dʒàá	"meanwhile, he came"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mëndé	"meanwhile, he went"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mà tındélé	"meanwhile, he pushed"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mà wówá	"meanwhile, he took"

➤ *náòméné* "keep on"

nà mà lá náòméné	"I keep on eating"
nà mà dʒă náòméné	"I keep on coming"
nà mëndé náòméné	"you keep on going"
nà mà tındélé náòméné	"you keep on pushing"
nà mà wówá náòméné	"we keep on taking"

(2) Ingressive

➤ *é* "still"

nà é béli ndí mólèlì ⁽¹⁴⁾	"I'm still a teacher"
wè é béli ndí mólèlì	"you're still a teacher"
à é béli ndí mólèlì	"s/he is still a teacher"
ì é béli ndí bálèlì ⁽¹⁵⁾	"we're still teachers"

è é βéli ndí βàlèli	"you're still teachers"
βá é βéli ndí βàlèli ⁽¹⁶⁾	"they're still teachers"

➤ *òzríkùmbò* or *ô mbúzá* *βóndá* "previously"

òzríkùmbò nà mà βé mòléèli	"previously, I was a teacher"
òzríkùmbò ò mà βé ndí mòónèli	"previously, you were a farmer"
òzríkùmbò à mà βé ndí mòòkèli	"previously, he was a player"
òzríkùmbò ì mà βé ndí βàtò βá gbāmù	"previously, we were nice people"
òzríkùmbò è mà βé ndí βàléèli	"previously you were teachers"
òzríkùmbò βá mà βé ndí βàónèli	"previously they were farmers"

(3) Resultative

➤ *βiúkèli* or *óbèdžèlí* "on arrival"

a.	à mëndé ó βiúkèli	"s/he walked on arrival"
	à mà βángá ó βiúkèli	"s/he ran on arrival"
	à mà lá ó βiúkèli	"s/he ate on arrival"
	à mà gbè éwòló ó βiúkèli	"s/he worked on arrival"
	à mèmá ó βiúkèli	"s/he sang on arrival"

b.	à mée lá ó βiúkèli	"s/he ate it on arrival"
	à mée 'gbé'á ó βiúkèli	"s/he did it on arrival"
	à mà ηwémá ó βiúkèli	"s/he sang it on arrival"
	nà mée ké ó βiúkèli	"I cut it on arrival"
	ò mée tíndélé ó βiúkèli	"you pushed it on arrival"

(4) Terminative

➤ *ô βóndá* "in/on time"

nà mà dǎ ô βóndá	"I came on time"
ò mèmá ô βóndá	"you sang on time"
à mëndé ô βóndá	"s/he went on time"
wěngà izrô émê má gbèá ô βóndá	"that is we who worked in time"
wěngà izrô émê má dǎ ô βóndá	"that is we who came in time"

➤ *kpílílí* "early"

ìzró ndí mǎ dzǎ éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who came early in the morning"
ìzró ndí ì mēmbǎ éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who sang early in the morning"
ìzró ndí ì mēndě éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who went early in the morning"
ìzró ndí ì mágbeà éwòlò éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who worked early in the morning"
ìzró ndí mǒngòáná éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who helped early in the morning"

➤ *wúŭná wāzrê* "all day long"

à mēndé wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he walked the whole day/all day long"
à mǎ wángá wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he ran the whole day/all day long"
à mǎ lá wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he ate the whole day/all day long"
à mǎ gbèà èwòlò wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he worked the whole day/all day long"
à mēmbá wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he sang the whole day/all day long"

(5) Habitual

➤ *jòkí* and *mǎ βé* "used to"

nà jòkí litíjǎ mólánà ámi	"I used to beat my wife"
ò jòkí litíndèlè mólánà àngó	"you used to push your wife"
ò jòkí liβǎné mólánà éní	"s/he used to carry his wife"
ì jòkí lǔmǎ βáálánà βázrú	"we used to send our wives"
è jòkí lilìngáná βáálánà βǎnú	"you (pl) used to love your wives"
βǎ 'jòkí làβízrè βáálánà βáwú	"they used to sell their wives"
nà mǎ βé lõnà	"I used to cultivate"
βá ónèli βá mǎ βé lõnà	"the farmers used to cultivate"

➤ *ngèlèngèlè* "always"

nǒngwànà mólánà ámi ngèlèngèlè	"I always help my wife"
ò βànè mólánà àngó ngèlèngèlè	"you always carry his wife"
à ànànà mólánè éní ngèlèngèlè	"s/he always beat his wife"
džǔmǎ βáálánà βázrú ngèlèngèlè	"we always send our wives"
è βélè βáálánà βǎnú ngèlèngèlè	"you (pl) always call your wives"
βá 'lìngáni βáálánà βǎnú ngèlèngèlè	"they always love your wives"

➤ *jòkí / ɲgɛ̀lɛ̀ɲgɛ̀lɛ̀* "often"

à jòkí ìtjá mólánè éní	"s/he often beats his wife"
à jòkí lǒngwàná mólánè éní	"s/he often helps his wife"
à jòkí ìtíndèlè mólánè éní	"s/he often pushes his wife"
à jòkí ìtjá mólánè éní lùmbè	"s/he often slaps his wife"
à jòkí lítè mólánè éní	"s/he often fucks his wife"

(6) Simultaneity

➤ *émá* "while"

è mbèzrà à lâ émá à èndê	"the boy eats while walking"
è mólánà à émbà émá à èndê	"the woman sings while walking"
è múpánà à gbè éwòlò émá à émbā	"the man cultivates while singing"
è mbèzrà è lâ émá jémbā	"the boy eats while singing"
è mòlèlì à zrâ émá à èndê	"the teacher dances while going"

In the past, a different morpheme is used.

➤ *zrì* "while"

nà mà lá zrì ná èndê	"I ate while walking"
ò mèmá zrì wáà lá	"you sang while eating"
à mèjá zráà ónà	"s/he cried while cultivating"
ì mà dǔǎ dǔáà zrâ	"we came while dancing"
è mà tíjá zrì jáà jò	"you slapped while laughing"
βá mà ké zrì βáà tíndèlè	"they cut while pushing"

➤ *nǎ* "as ..."

è mbèzrà à lâ nǎ èndê	"the boy eats as he walks"
è mólánà à émbà nǎ gbè éwòlò	"the woman sings as she works"
è múpánà à βéli ò likpèà nà émbà	"the man cultivates as he sings"
è mbèzrà à lâ nà émbà	"the boy eats as he sings"
è mòlèlì à zrá èngòmò nǎ èndê	"the teacher dances as he goes"

➤ Zero morpheme "and"

è mbèzrà à lâ à zrâ	"the boy eats and dances"
è mólánà à émbà à èndê	"the woman sings and walks"
è múpánà à gbè éwòlò à émbà	"the man cultivates and sings"

è mbèzrà è lâ é má í émbà (jémbà)	"the boy eats and sings"
è mòlèlì à zrà à èndè	"the teacher dances and goes"
èmbèzrà è lâ jèndè or	"the boy eats and walks"
èmbèzrà jèndè ì lâ	"the boy walks and eats"

(7) Sudden action

➤ *kàzrikàzrì* "quickly"

nà mà ké kàzrikàzrì	"I cut quickly"
ò mà tíndèlè kàzrikàzrì	"you pushed quickly"
à mà àbízá kàzrikàzrì	"s/he sold quickly"
ì mèá kàzrikàzrì	"we cried quickly"
è mà ɲgbàá kàzrikàzrì	"you gave quickly"
βá mòngá kàzrikàzrì	"they built quickly"

➤ *màkpázrí* "rashly"

à mà gbèá nà mà kpázrí	"s/he worked rashly"
nà mà ké nà mà kpázrí	"I cut rashly"
ò mà tíndélè nà mà kpázrí	"you pushed rashly"
à mà àbízá nà mà kpázrí	"s/he sold rashly"
è mà ɲgbàá ná 'má kpázrí	"you gave rashly"
βá mòngá ná 'má kpázrí	"they built rashly"

à mée lá kàzrikàzrì	"s/he ate it quickly"
à mèémbá kàzrikàzrì	"s/he sang it quickly"
ò mée tíndélè kàzrikàzrì	"you pushed it quickly"
nà mée ké nà mà kpázrí	"I cut it rashly"
ì mèúmá nà mà kpázrí	"we sent it rashly"
βá mèóngá nà mà kpázrí	"they built it rashly"

(8) Repetition

To express repetition, Mokpe uses the adverb *βê* "again".

džà βê	"come again"
gbèá βê	"do again"
ómá βê	"send again"
émbá βê	"sing again"

lá βê	"eat again"
wówá βê	"take it again"
ímá 'βóndá ó 'dzá βê	"when do you come again?"

(9) Cumulative

The cumulation adverb βê "also" is used to indicate addition.

Mbá βê nààzrà lèègbèà

mbá βê nà àzrà l-é-gbèà
 1sg.Obj also 1sg want INF-Obj-do
 "I also want to do it"

Wà βê ò mèéndá ηgá

wà βê ò m- èéndá ηgá
 2sg.Obj also 2sg PAST go there
 "Did you also go there?"

Mbá βê nèndè ηmêlê

mbá βê n- Ø èndè ηmêlê
 1sg.Obj also 1sg PRES go tomorrow
 "I will also go tomorrow"

2. Quantification of action

(1) Intensive

➤ dʒòódʒòó "much, very very"

a. with lééjà "sharp"	
lùwèndì lééjà	"the knife is sharp"
lééjà	"it is sharp"
lééjà	"it is very sharp"
lééjà dʒòódʒòó	"it is very, very sharp"
lééjà dʒòódʒòó	"it is very, very, very sharp"
à wóβì lùwèndì lééjà	"s/he has a sharp knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lé'èjà dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very sharp knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lé'èjà dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very, very sharp knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lé'èjà dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very, very, very sharp knife"

b. with lítúnì "blunt"	
lùwèndì lítúnì	"the knife is blunt"
lítúnì	"it is blunt"
lítúnì	"it is very blunt"
lítúnì dʒòódʒòó	"it is very, very blunt"
lítúnì dʒòódʒòó	"it is very, very, very blunt"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì	"s/he has a blunt knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very blunt knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very, very blunt knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very, very, very blunt knife"

➤ *dʒòódʒòó* and idiomatic expression "too much, excessively"

a. dʒòódʒòó as "too much"	
à tò dʒòódʒòó	"s/he speaks too much"
à èndè dʒòódʒòó	"s/he walks too much"
à gbè éwòlò dʒòódʒòó	"s/he works too much"
b. Idiomatic expression "too much"	
à βéli ì lóngó	"s/he speaks too much"
à lɪŋgáni mètòwú	"s/he speaks too much"
à tòjizré zrájì	"s/he speaks too much"
à βéli mètòwú	"s/he speaks too much"

(2) Ability

➤ *litánè* "be able to" (Affirmative)

nà táné litíjà mólánà ámi	"I am able to beat my wife"
ò táné litíndèlè mólánà àngó	"you are able to push your wife"
à táné liβàné mólánà éní	"s/he is able to carry his wife"
tánê lǔmà βáàlánà βázzú	"we are able to send our wives"
táné lilingánà βáàlánà βánpú	"you (pl) are able to love your wives"
βá tánê làβízré βáàlánà βáwú	"they are able to sell their wives"

➤ *làémbèné* "not be able to" (Negative)

nà zrá 'tánè litíjà mólánà ámi	"I am not able to beat my wife"
ò zrá 'tánè litíndèlè mólánà àngó	"you are not able to push your wife"
à zrá 'tánè làndzilé mólánà éní	"s/he is not able to carry his wife"

ì zrá 'tánè lǔmà ßáàlánà ßáazrú	"we are not able to send our "wives"
è zrá 'tánè lìlǐngáná ßáàlánà ßápnú	"you (pl) are not able to love your wives"
ßá zrà tánè làßíazré ßáàlánà ßáwú	"they are not able to sell their wives"

(3) Negation of habitual

➤ òzrì "never"

The expression of "at no time", "not in any degree" as well as the permanent negation of habitual is done via the privative adverb òzrì "never".

òzrì lá	"never eat"
òzrì ßélé	"never call"
òzrì tíndélé	"never push"
òzrì lìßówá	"never open"
òzrèndé	"never go"
òzrèmbá	"never sing"
òzrì kàwá	"never divide"
òzrì ɲgbă	"never give"
òzrààndá	"never buy"
òzrèèjá	"never cry"

3. Manner of action

➤ lǎṅgòà "carefully"

nà mà ké nà gb ǎṅgò	"I cut carefully"
ò mà tíndélé né gbǎṅgò	"you pushed carefully"
à mà àßíazré né gbǎṅgò	"s/he sold carefully"
ì mèèjá nà gbǎṅgò	"we cried carefully"
è mà ɲgbàá ná gbǎṅgò	"you gave carefully"
ßá mǎṅgá ná gbǎṅgò	"they built carefully"

➤ *gbāmù* or *lilá* "well"

nà mée ké gbāmù	"I cut it well"
ò mée tíndélé gbāmù	"you pushed it well"
à mèá 'bízré gbāmù	"s/he sold it well"
ì mèúmá gbāmù	"we sent it well"
è mée ń'gbá gbāmù	"you gave it well"
βá mèónḡá gbāmù	"they built it well"

➤ *ndèmù* "nicely"

nà mée ké ndèmù	"I cut it nicely"
ò mée tíndélé ndèmù	"you pushed it nicely"
à mèá 'bízré ndèmù	"s/he sold it nicely"
ì mèúmá ndèmù	"we sent it nicely"
è mée ń'gbá ndèmù	"you gave it nicely"
βá mèónḡá ndèmù	"they built it nicely"

➤ *ínónḡí* "restlessly"

a. nà mà ké nà jónḡí	"I cut restlessly"
ò mà tíndélé nà jónḡí	"you pushed restlessly"
à mà àbízré nà jónḡí	"s/he sold restlessly"
ì mèèjá nà jónḡí	"we cried restlessly"
è mà ḡgbàá nà jónḡí	"you gave restlessly"
βá mònḡá ná jónḡí	"they built restlessly"

b. nà mée ké nà jónḡí	"I cut it restlessly"
ò mée tíndélé nà jónḡí	"you pushed it restlessly"
à mèá 'bízré nà jónḡí	"s/he sold it restlessly"
ì mèúmá nà jónḡí	"we sent it restlessly"
è mée ń'gbá nà jónḡí	"you gave it restlessly"
βá mèónḡá nà jónḡí	"they built it restlessly"

4. Summary

Table 13. Morphemes for phase of actions, manner or quantity

téjà βóndá / ô βóndá	"meantime"
ólămbèlè / ndí	"meanwhile"
náòméné	"Keep on"
é	"still"
òzríkùmbò / ô mbúzá fóná /	"previously"
ó'fóná mbúzá / ó'fóná jàkái	
βiúkèlì / óβèdžèlí	"on coming, arrival"
ô fóná	"in / on time"
kpílílílí / lăkèlè	"early"
wúŭná wâzrê	"all day long"
jòkí and mà βé	"used to"
í ó'fóná džâzrê	"all the time"
ŋgèlèŋgèlè	"always"
ŋgèlèŋgèlè / jòkí	"often"
émá (present tense)	"while"
zrì (past tense)	"while"
nă	"as ..." / "like"
Zero morpheme	"and"
kàzríkàzrí	"quickly"
màkpázrí	"rashly"
džòódžòó	"much, very very"
litánè	"be able to"
làémbèné	"not be able to"
lăŋgòà	"carefully"
gbămù / lìliá	"well"
ndèmù	"nicely"
íjónǵí	"restlessly"
nă	"like"

5. Time and locative adverbs

Here are the time and locative adverbs commonly used in Mokpe.

(1) Time adverbs

éélélé	"in the morning"
èṅgómbé	"in the evening"
èḃóndá wòzrô	"ago", "sometimes ago"
ímá 'ḃóndá	"when"
jàwónò	"today"
mó'ne ṅmâ	"next year"
nâṅgê	"now"
ṅmêlê	"yesterday", "tomorrow"
ó ṅgbèndè	"in one month"
ó ṅmâ	"in one year"
ó wíki	"in one week"
ó wòzrô	"after"
òzrí kúmbò	"short ago or a while ago"
ó'mééná mé jáò	"in three days"
wózrí jáò	"in three days"
wózrí nējí	"in four days"
wózrí tâ	"in five days"
wózrí wă	"the day before yesterday"
wózrí ḃàá	"in two days"
wúũḃû	"in the night"

(2) Locative adverbs

ánù	"here"
áṅgâ	"there"
bjáná	"before"
ḃâzrê or jâzrê	"together"
nătèè	"until"
ô mbúzrà	"behind"
ô ṅmápú	"on"
ó tōṅgóngó	"nearby"
ô zré	"under"
ôténì	"in", "inside"
ó'né	"from"

V. SYNTAX

1. Simple Sentence Construction

Mokpe is an SVO language. In an affirmative indicative sentence, the verbal clause has the order of morphemes below:

Subject Pronoun - (Tense/Aspect) - (Object Pronoun) - Verb Root - Object

Examples:

- a. Nà lɪŋgáni è-ŋgòndò "I love a girl."
 1sg love +PRES 7.DET-9.girl
- b. Nà mà lá mbǒ "I ate a banana."
 1sg PAST eat 9.banana

When the object pronoun is inserted into the verbal complex, the structure is then:

Subject Pronoun-(Tense/Aspect)-(Object Pronoun)-Infix vowel O-Verb Root

Examples:

lìzròzrá "to wash"

à	mà	n	ò	zròzrá	"he washed me"
à	m	ò	ò	zròzrá	"he washed you (sg)"
à	mà	m	ò	zròzrá	"he washed him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	zròzrá	"he washed us"
à	m	è	è	zròzrá	"he washed you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		ʼzrózrá	"he washed them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	wash	

lìŋgbǎ "to give"

à	mà	n	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave me"
à	m-	ò	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave you (sg)"
à	mà	m	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave us"
à	m	è	è	ŋgbǎ	"he gave you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		ʼŋgbá	"he gave them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	give	

liβélè "to call"

à	mà	n	ò	βélé	"he called me"
à	m	ò	ò	βélé	"he called you (sg)"
à	mà	m-	ò	βélé	"he called him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	βélé	"he called us"
à	m	è	è	βélé	"he called you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		βélé	"he called them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	call	

litíndèlè "to push"

à	mà	n	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed me"
à	m	ò	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed you (sg)"
à	mà	m	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed us"
à	m	è	è	tíndélé	"he pushed you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		tíndélé	"he pushed them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	push	

That structure does not change when you use the imperative mood. The pronoun object is still intercalated in the verbal phrase.

liŋgbǎ "to give" (Imperative)

ó	m	ò	ŋgbé	è-ból	"give him the ball"
ó	dʒ	ò	ŋgbě	è-ból	"give us the ball"
3sg	ObjP	InfxV	give	7.DET-9.ball	

As we can see in the examples above, the object pronoun is systematically followed by the infix vowel *ò*. If we admit that the object pronouns have the following shapes: *nà* "me", *ò* "you (sg)", *mò* "him/her", *ì* "us", *è* "you (pl)", *βá* "them", then the presence of the vowel *ò* triggers the phonological processes whereby the vowels of the object pronoun are either deleted or changed into consonant. This is illustrated as follows:

<i>nà</i>	→	<i>n</i>	"me"	(deletion of the vowel <i>à</i>)
<i>mò</i>	→	<i>m</i>	"him/her"	(deletion of the vowel <i>ò</i>)
<i>ì</i>	→	<i>dʒ</i>	"us"	(the vowel <i>i</i> become <i>dʒ</i>)

Also note the deletion of the vowel /a/ of the past tense marker at the 2sg and 2pl, i.e. *mà* → *m* in a sequence *mà* + *ò* (2sg) and *mà* + *è* (2pl).

As for the infix vowel /ò/, it assimilates to the vowel /e/ of the 2pl become, and deletes completely when it occurs in front of the 3pl *βá*.

It is equally very important to note that in vowel-initial verb root, the infix vowel /ò/ does show up and there are a series of phonological processes that are triggered by its absence depending on whether the verb root starts with the vowel /-i/, /-u/, /-o/ or /-a/.

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-i/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur, mostly on the object pronouns:

- ▶ the vowel of the 1sg deletes ($n\grave{a} \rightarrow n$), i.e. /a/ \rightarrow [Ø]/__ i.
- ▶ a prothetic semivowel, /w/, is inserted between the 2sg and the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /Ø/ \rightarrow [w]/ ò __ i.
- ▶ the vowel /ò/ of the 3sg $m\grave{o}$ deletes (i.e. $m\grave{o} \rightarrow m$) and the consonant /m/ becomes [ŋm] before the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /m/ \rightarrow [ŋm]/__ i.
- ▶ the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ \rightarrow [dʒ]/__ i.
- ▶ the vowel /è/, the object pronoun of 2pl, is realised [i] before the vowel /i/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /è/ \rightarrow [i] /__ i.
- ▶ the vowel /á/ of the 3pl $\beta\acute{a}$ deletes before the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /á/ \rightarrow Ø /__ i.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

lĩdʒòwà "to ask"

à	mà	n	idʒówá	"he asked me"
à	m	ò	widʒówá	"he asked you (sg)"
à	mà	ŋm	idʒówá	"he asked him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	idʒówá	"he asked us"
à	m	i	idʒówá	"he asked you (pl)"
à	mà	β	idʒówá	"he asked them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	ask	

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-u/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur on the object pronouns:

- ▶ the vowel of the 1sg deletes ($n\grave{a} \rightarrow n$), i.e. /a/ \rightarrow [Ø]/__ u.
- ▶ the vowel /ò/, the object pronoun of 2sg, is realised [ù] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /ò/ \rightarrow [ù] /__ u.
- ▶ the vowel /ò/ of the 3sg $m\grave{o}$ is realised [ù] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /ò/ \rightarrow [ù] /__ u.
- ▶ the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ \rightarrow [dʒ]/__ u.

- the vowel /á/ of the 3pl *βá* deletes before the vowel /u/ of the verb root, i.e. /á/ → Ø /___ u (*βá* → *β*), and the consonant /β/ is realised [w] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root, i.e. /β/ → [w] /___ u.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

lǔŋmèlè "to show"

à	mà	n	ùŋmélé	"he showed me"
à	m	ù	úŋmélé	"he showed you (sg)"
à	mà	mù	úŋmélé	"he showed him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ùŋmélé	"he showed us"
à	m	è	úŋmélé	"he showed you (pl)"
à	mà	w	úŋmélé	"he showed them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	show	

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-o/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur on the object pronouns:

- the vowel of the 1sg deletes (*nà* → *n*), i.e. /a/ → [Ø] /___ o.
 ► the vowel /ɔ/ of the 3sg *mɔ* is realised [ò] before the vowel /o/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /ɔ/ → [ò] /___ o.
 ► the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /o/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ → [dʒ] /___ o.
 ► the vowel /á/ of the 3pl *βá* deletes before the vowel /o/ of the verb root, i.e. /á/ → Ø /___ o (*βá* → *β*), and the consonant /β/ is realised [w] before the vowel /o/ of the verb root, i.e. /β/ → [w] /___ o.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

lǔŋgòwàná "to help"

à	mà	n	òŋgówáná	"he helped me"
à	m	ò	óŋgówáná	"he helped you (sg)"
à	mà	mò	óŋgówáná	"he helped him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	òŋgówáná	"he helped us"
à	m	è	óŋgówáná	"he helped you (pl)"
à	mà	w	óŋgówáná	"he helped them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	help	

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-a/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur, mostly, on the object pronouns:
- ▶ the vowel of the 1sg deletes ($nà \rightarrow n$), i.e. /a/ \rightarrow [Ø]/__ a.
 - ▶ a prothetic semivowel, /w/, is inserted between the 2sg and the vowel /a/ of the verb root, i.e. /Ø/ \rightarrow [w]/ò__ a.
 - ▶ the vowel /ə/ of the 3sg $mə$ deletes (i.e. $mə \rightarrow m$) and the consonant /m/ becomes [ɲm] before the vowel /a/ of the verb root, i.e. /m/ \rightarrow [ɲm]/__ a.
 - ▶ the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /a/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ \rightarrow [dʒ]/__ a.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

làṅgbá "to shoot, to throw"

à	mà	n	àṅgbá	"he shot me"
à	m	ò	wàṅgbá	"he shot you (sg)"
à	mà	ɲm	àṅgbá	"he shot him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	àṅgbá	"he shot us"
à	m	è	àṅgbá	"he shot you (pl)"
à	mà	βá	ǎṅgbá	"he shot them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	shoot	

Even when the imperative mood is used, the infix vowel /ò/ still doesn't show up at all in a verb root starting with a vowel, and four of the rules identified above are equally observed.

lǒṅgòwàṇà "to help"

ó	n	òṅgówáné	"help me"
ó	mò	óṅgówáné	"help him"
ó	dʒ	òṅgówáné	"help us"
ó	w	óṅgówáné	"help them"
2sg	ObjP	help	

Also, when the object is the pronoun 'it', the infix vowel /ò/ does not surface in vowel-initial verb root. Note the insertion of the prothetic glide /j/ between the object pronoun and the verb root.

làndá "to buy"

nà	m	è	án ¹ dá	"I bought it"
à	m	è	án ¹ dá	"s/he bought it"
nà	mà	βé	! ¹ jándá	"I bought them"

à mà βέ ʼjándá "s/he bought them"
 3sg PAST ObjP buy

Thus the infix vowel /ò/ does show up in vowel-initial verb root, because the root already has its vowel. Thus, the vowel /ò/ which is intercalated between the object pronoun and the verb root is no longer necessary. This suggests that the structure SVO must have a vowel before the verbal root when the object is a pronoun. Let us call this infix vowel /ò/, a prothetic vowel which must be present each time a verbal predicate is constructed with an object pronoun.

When the pronominal object is 'it', there is variation according to referent because it is only in the correct context that it has meaning. The morpheme-by-morpheme analysis will give:

likótá / màkótá "bread/s" (cl. 5/6)

A: Ò óβì lĩ-ʼkótá Do you have the bread? (cl. 5)
 2sg have 5-bread + int
 B: ÈÈ nà l- -óβì Yes, I have it (the bread). (cl. 5)
 yes 1sg 5.ObjP have

A: Ò óβì mâ-kótá Do you have the breads? (cl. 6)
 2sg have 6-bread+ int
 B: ÈÈ nà m- óβì Yes, I have them (the breads). (cl. 6)
 yes 1sg 6.ObjP have

èβùmá / βèβùmá "fruit/s" (cl. 7/8)

A: Ò óβì é-βùmà Do you have the fruit? (cl. 7)
 2sg have 7-fruit+ inter
 B: ÈÈ n è óβì Yes, I have it (the fruit). (cl. 7)
 yes 1sg 7.ObjP have

A: Ò óβì βé-βùmà Do you have the fruits? (cl. 8)
 2sg have 8-fruit+ inter
 B: ÈÈ nà βé óβì Yes, I have them (the fruits). (cl. 8)
 yes 1sg 8.ObjP have

ìṇàmà / íṇàmà "fish/es" (cl. 9/10)

A: Ò óβì ì-ṇàmà Do you have the fish? (cl. 9)
 2sg have 9-fish+ inter
 B: ÈÈ n dɜ óβì Yes, I have it (the fish). (cl. 9)

yes 1sg 9.ObjP have

A: Ò óβì í-ṣàmà Do you have the fishes? (cl. 10)
 2sg have 10-fish+ inter

B: Èè nà dʒ óβì Yes, I have them (the fishes). (cl. 10)
 yes 1sg 10.ObjP have

2. Complex Sentence Constructions

Many other morphemes can enter the construction of sentence in Mokpe.

1. Qualification of the noun in the NP

À mà lá ṣòβìṣà j-à kpájókúpájó
 3sg PAST eat 9.lemon 9-Cd sour
 "S/he ate a sour lemon."

Ò m -imá è-βòndí ndénè
 2sg PAST dig 7-hole 9.big
 "You dug a big hole."

Ò mà βátá è-βùmá j- -é'tí
 2sg PAST harvest 7-fruit 7-Cd strong
 "You harvested a strong fruit."

Note: lilâ "to eat"
 lĩmà "to dig"
 liβátà "to harvest"

2. Copula + predicate sentence

À βèlì ndí mò-tà wòòwê ndĩ à gbè é-wòlò gbámù
 3sg COP CLIT 1-person 1.bad but 3sg do.PRES 7-work 9.well
 "S/he is a bad person, but he works well"

Note: mòtò / βàtò "person"
 wòòwê "bad"
 ligbèá éwòlò "to (do) work"
 ligbèá "to do"
 èwòlò / βèwòlò "work"
 gbámù "well"

3. *Juxtaposition of complements*

À m òṅgó má-àtù, à mà àndá ndí l-ínì méné
 3sg PAST look at 9-fabric 3sg PAST buy CLIT 5-DEM only
 "S/he looked at the fabrics, she bought only this one"

Note: lǒṅgó "to look at"
 làndá "to buy"

À zr -énè zróṅgé w-àṅgó, à m -éné ndí wà-ámì
 3sg NEG see 9-father 2sg-PosP 3sg PAST see only 1sg-PosP
 "S/he did not see your father, he saw only mine"

Note: zrí NEG past
 lǐnè "to see"
 zráṅgó / zráṅgó "guest"

4. *Consequence*

È-ndzòó è mà ṅwáá ná mé-ànò lí-ǎnèlì nà lí-ìbà
 7.DET-9.tiger Cd PAST die because 4-trick 5-violence and 5-theth
 of
 "The tiger died because of tricks, violence and theth"

Note: ndzòó / ndzòó "tiger"
 liṅwâ "to die"
 ṅmànò / mènànò "trick"
 liànèlì / liànèlì "violence"
 lǐbà / lǐbà "theth"

5. *Circumstantial clause*

È-wúfà é mà ṅê mè-éǒ mé-éní è-ṅgbâ è mà -áká
 7.DET-9.fowl 7.Cd PAST lay 4-egg 4-POS 7.DET-9.dog 7.Cd PAST pass
 "When the fowl layed her eggs, the dog passed"

Note: wúfà "fowl"
 liṅê "to lay"
 ṅmèó / mèó "egg"
 ṅgbâ "dog"
 lǎkà "pass"

Èndálé	à	mà	jà	ɲmána	mó-lána	ó	ɲgbèndè	j-à	mbúzrà
1. Endalle	1.Cd	PAST	give birth	1.child	1-male	LOC	9.month	9-Cd	behind

"Endalle gave birth to a baby girl last month"

Note: lɪpâ "give birth"
 ɲgbèndè / ɲgbèndè "month"

6. Destination, location

Ò	mà	-iká	mé-èó	óténá	kòòfà	dʒ-àzrê
3sg	PAST	put	4-egg	PREP	10.calabash	10-all

"S/he put the eggs in all the calabashes"

Ò	mà	-iká	mé-èó	óténá	tòímá	kòòfà
3sg	PAST	put	4-egg	PREP	each	9.calabash

"S/he put the eggs in each calabash"

7. Embedded (relative) clause

Kúlù	à	m	òṅgá	ó	mòṅnè	à	mà	zràṅgó	áné	è-zràṅgó	ámì
1.	1.Cd	PAST	built	LOC	9.land	3sg	PAST	inherit	from	7-father	1.POS
Tortoise											

"Tortoise built on the land he inherited from my father"

Note: kúlù / kúlù "tortoise"
 lǒṅgá "to build"
 mòṅnè / mòṅnè "land"
 lizràṅgó "to inherit"

8. Conditional clause

N	ô	lâ	jêtená	w	iβê
1sg	Mood	eat	COND	2sg	cook +PRES

"I would eat if you cook"

Ì	zr	ô	lâ	jêtená	ò	zrà	àzrà
1sg	Neg	Mood	eat	COND	2sg	Neg	want +PRES

"We would not eat if you don't want"

Òmá	nà	mà	βélé	jêtená	à	zrí	dʒè
CLIT	1sg	PAST	call	COND	3sg	Neg	come

"I would have called if she had not come"

3. Relative Clauses

The relative forms use invariably the morpheme *émá* regardless of the noun class that the relative pronoun qualifies. It is placed just after the noun and precedes the verb concord.

è mólánà émá à jǒ	cl. 1	"the women who laughs"
βáǎnà émá βá jǒ	cl. 2	"the children who laugh"
mǒβò émá móβí líβùmbú	cl. 3	"the head which has hair"
méǒβò émá méóβí líβùmbú	cl. 4	"the heads which have hair"
íngbâ émá ílómă	cl. 10	"the dogs which barks"
wôngó émá wó lùtèjá	cl. 14	"the brain which thinks"
íwǒnì émá dzónwă	cl. 13	"the cartridge which kills"

The relative pronoun *émá* can be omitted.

lǐzròngá émá líké'é í nàmà	cl. 5	"the tooth which cuts meat"
lǐzròngá líké'é í nàmà		
éwòlò émá ékú	cl. 7	"the work which ends"
éwòlò ékú		
èngbá émá èlómă	cl. 9	"the dog which barks"
èngbá èlò		

An example of morpheme-by-morpheme gives:

Lǐ-zròngá	émá	líké'é	í	nàmà
5.DEM-tooth	RelPro	cut + PRES	9.Cd	9.meat
"The tooth which cuts meat"				

4. Questions

In Mokpe, apart from interrogative pronouns, there is no lexical device that indicates interrogation. In other words, the syntactic structure of an interrogative sentence is similar to the one of a declarative sentence. Interrogations or questions are rendered by a rising intonation at the end of the utterance.

Ò	ó'bí	éβùmà
Ò	ó'bí	é-βùmà
2sg	have	7-fruit

"Do you have the fruit?"

Ò óbì mākótá

Ò óbì mākótá

2sg have 6-fruit

"Do you have the breads?"

Ímá 'βóndá ó 'dʒá βê

Ímá 'βóndá ó Ø 'dʒá βê

IntP 9.time 2sg PRES come again

"When do you come again?"

Wáá mbèlè ánù nátèè èné èèjé ézròmbò

W áá mbèlè ánù nátèè è-né è-èjé é-zròm-bò

2sg TAM wait here until 7-DemPro 7-tree 7-roten-PASS

"Are you waiting here so that this tree get rotten?"

5. Copula and Existential Sentences

Non-verbal predicates are constructed with the copulative morpheme *βéli* which will take the meaning of quality, location and stabilisation depending on the particle that precedes or follows it. A concept like "origin" is equally presented under non-verbal predicates.

1. Quality: *βéli ndí* "be"

The morphemic sequence ... *βéli ndí* "be", positive form, generally expresses quality. The negation form is rendered with *zrá èndzè* → *zrèndzè*.

Positive	Negative
nà βéli ndí mòòkèli	nà zrèndzè mòòkèli
"I am a player"	"I am not a player"
ò βéli ndí ngàngà	ò zrèndzè ngàngà
"you are a doctor"	"you are not a doctor"
à βéli ndí mòónèli	à zrèndzè mòónèli
"s/he is a farmer"	"he is not a farmer"
ì βéli ndí bàlèèli	ì zrèndzè bàlèèli
"we are teachers"	"we are not teachers"
è βéli ndí bàòkèli	è zrèndzè bàòkèli

"you are players"	"you are not players"
βá βéli ndí zrángó	βá zrèndzè zrángó
"they are fathers"	"they are not fathers"

2. Location: *βéli ó* "be"

The morphemic sequence ... *βéli ó* "be", positive form, expresses location. The negation form is equally rendered with *zrá èndzè* → *zrèndzè*.

Positive	Negative
nà βéli wíwòngó ⁽¹⁷⁾	nà zrèndzè wíwòngó
"I am in the box"	"I am not in the box"
ò βéli wélùwà	ò zrèndzè wélùwà
"you are in the market"	"you are not in the market"
à βéli ó mbóà	à zrèndzè ó mbóà
"s/he is in the village"	"s/he is not in the village"
ì βéli ó ndáwù	ì zrèndzè ó ndáwù
"we are in the house"	"we are not in the house"
è βéli ó wàngá	è zrèndzè ó wàngá
"you are in the farm"	"you (pl) are not in the farm"
βá βéli ó tũ	βá zrèndzè ó tũ
"they are in the room"	"they are not in the room"
nà βéli ánú ¹⁸	nà zrèndzè ánú
"I am here"	"I am not here"
ò βéli ángâ	ò zrèndzè ángâ
"you (sg) are there"	"you (sg) are not there"

3. Stabilization with *éβéli ndí*: "it is"

The morpheme *éβéli ndí* is used as a stabilizer ("it is"), in nouns of all classes and independent pronouns. Negation here is rendered by *zrá èndzè* → *zrèndzè* for human and *zrá èkété* → *zrèkété* for non-human and the independent pronouns. When *zrèkété* is used the particle *é* preceding *βéli* / *zrèndzè* (*éβéli* / *zrèndzè*) drops.

a.	In noun of all classes	
	Positive	Negative
	é βéli ndí lóβè	é zrèndzè lóβè
	"it is God"	"it is not God"
	é βéli ndí zrángó	é zrèndzè zrángó

"it is a father"	"it is not a father"
é βéli ndí lìnùṅgè	é zrèndzè lìnùṅgè
"it is Linonge"	"it is not Linonge"
é βéli ndí mòléèlì	é zrèndzè mòléèlì
"it is a teacher"	"it is not a teacher"
é βéli ndí ḡmàná	é zrèndzè ḡmàná
"it is a child"	"it is not a child"
é βéli ndí èβùamá	zrèkété èβùamá
"it is a fruit"	"it is not a fruit"
é βéli ndí èzrù	zrèkété èzrù
"it is a wall"	"it is not a wall"
é βéli ndí mbóli	zrèkété mbóli
"it is a goat"	"it is not a goat"
é βéli ndí tũ	zrèkété tũ
"it is a room"	"it is not a room"
é βéli ndí lizròṅgá	zrèkété lizròṅgá
"it is a tooth"	"it is not a tooth"

b. In independent pronouns			
Positive		Negative	
ìmbâ	"it is me"	zrèkété ìmbâ	"it is not me"
òwâ	"it is you"	zrèkété òwâ	"it is not you"
mô	"it is him"	zrèkété mô	"it is not him"
í zrô	"it is us"	zrèkété í zrô	"it is not us"
ínô	"it is us"	zrèkété ínô	"it is not you"
wô	"it is them"	zrèkété wô	"it is not them"

Note that *zrèndzè* (negation) can also be completed with *ndí*. Then, the opposition human vs non-human (i.e. *zrèndzè* vs. *zrèkété*) is neutralised.

Negative	
é zrèndzè ndí lĩnà	"it is not a name"
é zrèndzè ndí èlèla	"it is not a duck"
é zrèndzè ndí jàmà	"it is not an animal"
é zrèndzè ndí ndzìjá	"it is not a way"
é zrèndzè ndí kèrà	"it is not a monkey"
é zrèndzè ndí wòlò	"it is not a canoe"

4. Stabilization with *ó βéli ndí*: "there is"

The morpheme *ó βéli ndí* is also used as a stabilizer ("there is"), but most of the time without *ndí*. Negation here is done with *zrá èndzé* → *zrèndzé*.

Positive	Negative
ó βéli ndzòmì	ó zrèndzé ndzòmì
"there is a problem"	"there is no problem"
ó βéli wòòlì	ó zrèndzé wòòlì
"there is money"	"there is no money"
ó βéli βóndá	ó zrèndzé βóndá
"there is time"	"there is no time"
ó βéli èlùwà	ó zrèndzé èlùwà
"there is a market"	"there is no market"
ó βéli mbówà	ó zrèndzé mbówà
"there is a village"	"there is no village"
ó βéli wàngá	ó zrèndzé wàngá
"there is a farm"	"there is no farm"
ó βéli tũ	ó zrèndzé tũ
"there is a room"	"there is no room"
ó βéli mòzrô	ó zrèndzé mòzrô
"there is a river"	"there is no river"
ó βéli èβózrí	ó zrèndzé èβózrí
"there is a bottle"	"there is no bottle"
ó βéli lĩpkà	ó zrèndzé lĩpkà
"there is a bag"	"there is no bag"

5. Stabilization with *-ng-*: "that is"

Apart from *éβéli ndí* and *ó βéli ndí*, stabilization is equally realised with *-ng-* where the hyphens are replaced by the class markers [ǎ], [ò], [mó], [lí], [é], [í], [wó]. The first vowel is identical to the second. The tone on the first vowel is always low, whereas the final tone is systematically falling.

a.	Positive (independent pronouns)		
	mbá òngô	"that is me"	(cl.1)
	wǎ òngô	"that is you"	(cl.1)
	mǒ òngô	"that is s/he"	(cl.1)
	ìzró òngô	"that is we"	(cl.2)

èṅó òṅgô	"that is you"	(cl.2)
ḅá ṅṅà	"that is they"	(cl.2)

b.	Positive (all noun classes)		
	ṅmèní òṅgô	"that is a guest"	(cl.1)
	ṅmēmà mónṅgô	"that is a heart"	(cl.3)
	līzrò líṅḡî	"that is an eye"	(cl.5)
	èwòlò éṅḡê	"that is a work"	(cl.7)
	ṅàmà èṅḡê	"that is an animal"	(cl.9)
	ìṅṅî íṅḡî	"that is a bird"	(cl.13)
	wǒlò wónṅô	"that is a canoe"	(cl.14)

The negative forms of those phrases are:

a.	Negative (independent pronouns)		
	zrèkété ìmbâ	"that is not me"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété òwâ	"that is not you"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété mô	"that is not him"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété ízrô	"that is not us"	(cl.2)
	zrèkété íṅô	"that is not you"	(cl.2)
	zrèkété wô	"that is not them"	(cl.2)

b.	Negative (all noun classes)		
	zrèkété ṅmèní òṅgô	"that is not a guest"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété ṅmēmà mónṅgô	"that is not a heart"	(cl.3)
	zrèkété līzrò líṅḡî	"that is not an eye"	(cl.5)
	zrèkété èwòlò éṅḡê	"that is not a work"	(cl.7)
	zrèkété ṅàmà èṅḡê	"that is not an animal"	(cl.9)
	zrèkété ìṅṅî íṅḡî	"that is not a bird"	(cl.13)
	zrèkété wǒlò wónṅô	"that is not a canoe"	(cl.14)

6. Stabilization with *ndzê à βéli* "who is?"

Stabilization may also be realised with *ndzê à βéli* ("who is?"), as shown below.
Negation: *ndzê à zrá èndzê* → *ndzê à zrêndzê*.

Positive	Negative
ndzê à βéli ìmbâ	ndzê à zrêndzê ìmbâ
"who is me?"	"who is not me?"
ndzê à βéli wô	ndzê à zrêndzê wô

"who are they?"	"who are not they?"
ndʒê à βéli mbèzrà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mbèzrà
"who is a boy?"	"who is not a boy?"
ndʒê à βéli móβò	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mòóβò
"who is a head?"	"who is not a head?"
ndʒê à βéli lĩzrò	ndʒê à zrêndʒé lĩzrò
"who is an eye?"	"who is not an eye?"
ndʒê à βéli èlèlà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé èlèlà
"who is a duck?"	"who is not a duck?"
ndʒê à βéli kémà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé kémà
"who is a monkey?"	"who is not a monkey?"
ndʒê à βéli iwónì	ndʒê à zrêndʒé iwónì
"who is a cartridge?"	"who is not a cartridge?"
ndʒê à βéli wózrò	ndʒê à zrêndʒé wózrò
"who is a face?"	"who is not a face?"
ndʒê à βéli linòṅgè	ndʒê à zrêndʒé linòṅgè
"who is Linonge?"	"who is not Linonge?"
ndʒê à βéli èsèmè	ndʒê à zrêndʒé èsèmè
"who is Eseme?"	"who is not Eseme?"
ndʒê à βéli mbèlà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mbèlà
"who is Mbella?"	"who is not Mbella?"
ndʒê à βéli mòzròṅgè	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mùsòṅgè
"who is Munsonge?"	"who is not Munsonge?"

7. Origin: -úwélélé (ndí)

The morpheme -úwélélé (ndí) expresses origin. The negation is done with *zrà úwèlèlè ndí* → *zrúwèlèlè ndí*.

Positive	Negative
nùwélélé ⁽¹⁹⁾ ó zrùkùlù	nà zrúwèlèlè ndí ó wàngá
"I am from school"	"I am not from the farm"
òwúwélélé wélùwà	ò zrúwèlèlè ndí ó tũ
"you are from the market"	"you are not from the room"
àwúwélélé ndí ó mbówà	à zrúwèlèlè ndí ó 'mótówà
"s/he is from the village"	"s/he is not from the car"
dzùwélélé ndí ánù	í zrúwèlèlè ndí ó mōtówà
"we are here"	"we are not from the car"

jùwélélé ndí áṅgâ	è zrúwèlèlè ndí é ṅgêkí
"you are there"	"you are not from the place"
βúwélélé ndí ó ndáwò	βá zrúwèlèlè ndí ó mòzrô
"they are from the house"	"they are not from the river"
Paul àwúwélélé ndí ó ndzìjǎ	Paul à zrúwèlèlè ndí ó ndzìjǎ
"Paul is from the street"	"Paul is not from the street"
Paul nà Peter βúwélélé ndó ndzìjǎ	Paul nà Peter βá zrúwèlèlè ndí ó ndzìjǎ
"Paul and Peter are from the street"	"Paul and Peter are not from the street"

8. *Passive with agent*

Contrary to the passive without agent which is done with the suffix *βá* and its variants *βé* and *βó* (cf. section IV.2.8), the passive with agent is rendered by a sequential morpheme *βéné ndí*, irrespective of the vowel of the root, placed between the verb and the agent.

Èṅmánà à mà βélé βéné ndí nà ṅàṅgê	cl.1
"The child was called by the mother."	
βáǎnà βá mà zròzrà βéné ndí nà í ṅàṅgó dzáwó	cl.2
"The children were bathed by their mothers."	
Mǒṅè mó mòná βéné ndí nà è mòkálá	cl.3
"The land was cultivated by the white man."	
Méòṅè mé mòná βéné ndí nà βàkálá	cl.4
"The lands were cultivated by the white men."	
Lí'βáṅgí lì mà βáṅgá βéné ndí nà ímbèzrà	cl.5
"The race was ran by the boys."	
Máìdzá má mà ṅó βéné ndí nà mó	cl.6
"the blood was drunk by him."	
Étò é mà lá βéné ndí nà è pùzrí	cl.7
"The rat was eaten by the cat."	
βétò βé mà lá βéné ndí nà í pùzrí	cl.8
"The rat were eaten by the cats."	

Èṅgbâ è mà zròzrà βéné ndí nà mô "the dog was bathed by her."	cl.9
ìṅgbâ í mà βòzró βéné ndí nà mô "The dogs were chosen by her."	cl.10
Í'támí í mà wótó βéné ndí nà èṇmána "The shoe was put on by the child."	cl.13
Wóǎlò wó mà tózró βéné ndí nà èzrángó "The canoe was touched by the father."	cl.14

6. Useful Expressions

hěi	"heh!"
ǎṅgówà	"attention!"
ǎṅgówà	"Take care!"
wǎṅgówà	"be careful!"
wǎṅgówà	"watch out!"
ò gbé gbāmù	"congratulations!"
!'é	"yes!"
dzá!'é	"no!"
élélá gbāmù	"good morning!"
ṅgómá gbāmù	"good evening!", "good night!"
ndéi	"go, go away!"

VI. WORD LISTS

Each word we know, especially when it is the right word, is a powerful tool to express what we want. It is generally admitted that for basic communication, knowledge of vocabulary is more important than knowledge of grammar, structure or syntax. Indeed, it is possible to achieve very elementary communication skills in a language without knowing the structure or syntax of the target language, but with some basic lexical items. That is why I found it important to complete this grammatical sketch with a list of vocabulary. Obviously, it cannot replace huge works like Kagaya's (1992a) *A Classified Vocabulary of the Bakweri Language*, or Connell's (1997) *Mokpe (Bakweri) - English Dictionary*. It is an adjunct to these works and a completion of or confirmation to previous works.

This list is an extended version of the standard word list proposed by Morris Swadesh. It is organized in two sections, English-Mokpe and Mokpe-English. In each section, the words are grouped within constellations of part of speech: nouns, verbs and adjectives for easy and quick reference. In the list of nouns, the nouns are followed by their class number.

1. English - Mokpe

1. Nouns

	Singular	Plural
animal	èjémbé 9	βèjémbé 8
arm	mò 3	mèò 4
arrow	mòβàndzá 3	mèβàndzá 4
ashes	liwû 5	liwû 5
axe	jǒndò 19	βèòndò 8
back	mbúzrà 9	mbúzrà 10
bag	lǐkpà 5	măkpà 6
banana	ègbié 7	βègbié 8
banana	mbõ 9	ímbo 10
bark (of tree)	mòòwò mó èèjé 3	mèòwò mé èèjé 4
basket	ηgàtá 9	íηgàtá 10
bat	ηmǎmè 3	mèémè 4
beans	bíndzì 9	íbíndzì 10
beard	wòkpò 14	wòkpò 14
bee	jààwè 9	íjààwè 10
belly (external)	lùùngá 5	màùngá 6

bird	inóní 19	βènóní 8
blood	màjidzá 6	màjidzá 6
boat/canoe	wǎlò 14	wǎlò 14
boat/canoe	lǎndzì 5	màándzì 6
body	ɲô 9	ɲô or í'ɲo 10
bone	èèzré 7	βèèzré 8
bow (weapon)	likózá 5	màkózá 6
breast (female)	liβê 5	màβê 6
bush, farm	wàngá 9	íwàngá 10
buttocks	mbòndò 9	mbòndò 10
calabash	kòòfà 9	kòòfà 10
cassava	likpàmbà 5	màkpàmbà 6
cat	pùzrí (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	pùzrí 10
charcoal	βíndí à líjò 9	βíndí à líjò 10
chicken	wǔβà 14	dzǔβà 10
chief	kíngè 9	íkíngè 10
child	ɲmána 1	βána 2
chin	jǎzrù 7	βèázrù 8
cloth (material)	lùàtù 5	mààtù 6
cock	mòmá wǔβà 9	wòmé βá wǔβà 10
compound	èwókà 7	βèwókà 8
cooking pot	dzòngó dzá 'mólélí 19	βèòngó βé 'mólélí 8
corpse	mwimba 3	mìimba 4
cow	ɲàkà 9	ɲàkà or íɲàkà 10
crab	ìzròzré 19	βèzròzré 8
crocodile	ɲgándó 9	ɲgándó 10
darkness	dzítítí 9	wítítí 10
daughter	ɲgòndò 9	íɲgòndò 10
dawn	éélélé 7	βéélélé 8
day	wúná 9	wúná 10
doctor	ɲgàngà 9	βààngàngè 2
dog	ɲgbà 9	íɲgbà 10
door	liòβá 5	màòβá 6
door (with palm leaves)	mòkòɲá 3	mèkòɲá 4
dry season	jòkpè 7	βèòkpè 8
duck	èlèlà 7	βèlèlà 8
dust	zròwè 9	zròwè 10
eagle	dzòngó 19	βèòngó 8
ear	litò 5	màtò 6
earth (soil)	mòɲè 3	mèɲè 4
egg	ɲmèò 3	mèò or mèjó 4
elephant	ndzòkù 9	índzòkù 10
encouragement	mbákì 9	mbákì 10
eye	lǐzrò 5	mǐzrò 6

fabric	lùwàtù 5	mààtù 6
fascies	lǒwá 5	mǒŋwá or mǒwá 6
fat	mànòńó 6	mànòńó 6
father	tátè 9	ḃààtátè 2
fear	wóŋgó 14	wóŋgó 14
feather	èzráí or èzrájí 7	ḃèzráí or ḃèzrájí 8
female	ŋmàlí 1	ḃàáí 2
fire	mújá 3	míújá or mǐjújá 4
firewood	dzòlí 19	ḃèòlí 8
fish	ɲàmà mǎlíwà 9	ɲàmà dzá mǎlíwà 10
food	mòlélí 3	mèlélí 4
fowl	wúḡà 14	wúḡa 14
friend	mbúndá 9	ím búndá 10
goat	mbóli 9	mbóli 10
God	lǒḃè 9	lǒḃè 10
grass	èwùlé 7	ḃèwùlé 8
grinding stone	lǐjé lí ndókó 5	màjé má ndókó 6
grinding stone	lǐjé lá 'lí'zríkà 5	màjé má 'lí'zríkà 6
ground	mòòŋnè 3	mèòŋnè 4
groundnut	ŋgòndó 9	ŋgòndó 10
guest	ŋmèèní 1	ḃàèní 2
hair (head)	lǐḃùmbú 5	màḃùmbú 6
hand	lǐjá 5	màá 6
hat/cap	tàmbá 9	ítàmbá 10
head	mòóḃò 3	mèóḃò 4
heart	ŋmēmà 3	mèémà 4
he-goat	jòkpá mbóli 7	jòkpá á mbóli 7
hoe	ŋmǎ 3	mèá 4
horn	mòzréwá 3	mèzréwá 4
horse	wózrì (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 14	íwózrì 10
house	ndáwò 9	màndáwò 6
housefly	ɲìɲì 9	ɲìɲì 10
hunger	ndzàwù 9	ndzàwù 10
hunter	mòzròŋgòzròŋgò 1	ḃàzròŋgòzròŋgò 2
husband	mújánà 1	wújánà 2
iron (metal)	èèkè 7	ḃèèkè 8
jaw	lǐǎmà 5	màámà 6
king	kíŋgè 9	íkíŋgè 10
kite	wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14
knee	lǐǒŋgóngó 5	màóŋgóngó 6
knife	lǐwèndì 5	màwèndì 6
kola nut	lǐḃèlú 5	màḃèlú 6
lap	lǐḃèḃè 5	màḃèḃè 6
leaf	jálí 7	ḃèáí 8

leg	ɲmèndé 3	mèéndé 4
lie	mòlàngà 3	mèlàngà 4
lizard	ndzóló 9	ndzóló 10
louse	ɲɲá 9	ɲɲá 10
macabo	likàwò 5	màkàwò 6
machete	βáo 9	βáo 10
maize	mbàzrì 9	ímbàzrì 10
male	mòmè 3	mèómè 4
man	múnánà 1	wúnánà 2
market	èlùwà 7	βèlùwà 8
mat	izrázrí 19	βèzrázrí 8
meat, animal	ɲàmà 9	ɲàmà 10
money	mààli 6	mààli 6
money	ɲgèjété 9	ɲgèjété 10
money	wòli 14	wòli 14
monkey	kémà 9	íkémà 10
moon	élówàlòwà 7	élówàlòwà 7
mortar	mátà (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 6	mátà 6
mosquito	dzùṅgù 19	βjùṅgù 8
mother	ɲàṅgó 9	íṅgò 10
mother's brother	mòláló 3	mèláló 4
mount Cameroon	φàkó 9	φàkó 10
mountain	mòlí 3	mèlí 4
mouth	wàná 14	wàná 14
mud	lizrándzà 5	màzrándzà 6
nail	ɲgàndà 9	íṅgàndà 10
name	línà 5	mínà 6
navel	ndzúnṅù 9	ndzúnṅù 10
neck	liwò 5	màwò 6
needle	ndòndòki 9	ndòndòki 10
new-born	ɲmèṅgé 3	mèèṅgé 4
night	wû 14	màwû 6
nose	mòβémbé 3	mèβémbé 4
notable	mòndénè 1	βàndénè 2
oil	màwúdzà 6	màwúdzà 6
old person	èkòkà mòtò 7	βèkòkà βé βàtò 8
orange	ilándzò 19	màlándzò 6
palm oil	lǐjà 5	mǐjà 6
palm wine	mímbá málìjà 9	mímbá málìjà 10
penis	jòkó 7	βèòkó 8
penis	tfólóló 9	tfólóló 10
pepper	ìndókó 9	βèndókó 8
permission	βòndzà 9	βòndzà 10
person	mòtò 1	βàtò 2

pig	ngòwá 9	íngòwá 10
plantain	likò 5	mèkò 4
porcupine	ngòmbá 9	ngòmbá 10
pot	dzòngó 19	βèóngó 8
race	liβàngà 5	màβàngà 6
rain	mbúwà 9	mbúwà 10
rainy season	èβùβà 7	βèβùβà 8
rat	ètò 7	βètò 8
read	lilàngà 5	lilàngà 6
river	mòzrò 3	mèzrò 4
room	tũ 9	ítũ 10
root	mwàngá 3	mèàngá 4
rope	mòòlí 3	mèòlí 4
rubbish heap	lùútù 5	màwútù 6
saliva	βèólì 8	βèólì 8
salt	ìkpá 9	ìkpá 9
sand	ńàngá 9	ńàngá 10
sea	ηmándzà 3	mèándzà 4
seed	mùàngá 3	mèàngá 4
seed	βòngò 9	íβòngò 10
senior/older	múlú'lú 1	βàwúlú'lú 2
sheep	mǒlèngù 3	mělèngù 4
shoe	itàmbí 19	βètámbí 8
side	tóngóngó 9	tóngóngó 10
skin	mòòwò 3	mèòwò 4
sleep	línàngá 5	línàngá 5
smoke	lùtùtù 5	βiútùtù 8
snail	kó 9	kó 10
snake	gbààβá 9	mààβá 6
son	mbèzrà 9	ímbèzrà 10
song	mòzròkò 3	mèzròkò 4
soup/sauce/stew	ngòpà 9	íngòpà 10
spear (war)	lìjòngó 5	màòngó 6
speech	dzóβì 9	dzóβì 19
star	zrómbé 9	í'zrómbé 10
stomach (internal)	ìwùngá 19	βèwùngá 8
stone	lìjé 5	màjé 6
story	gbitó 14	màitó or màjító 6
sun, sunshine	ìgbê 19	ìgbê 19
tablet	gbèé 9	màé 6
tail	mòòndó 3	mèòndó 4
theth	lǐbà 5	lǐbà 5
thief	mwǐbè 1	βàíbè or βàjìbè 2
thigh	èzrózró 7	βèzrózró 8

thing	jǒmà 7	βěmà 8
thirst	ɲìzrè 9	ɲìzrè 10
thorn	ndzééndzée 9	índzééndzée 10
thread	mǒzrìngà 3	mězrìngà 4
tobacco	táǎkù (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	táǎkù 10
tongue	džěmè 9	džěmè 10
tooth	lizròngá 5	màzròngá 6
tortoise	ikúlèkùlè 9	íkúlèkùlè 10
tree, stick	èèjé 7	βèèjé 8
trick	ɲmànò 3	mèànò 4
urine	lǐjàlì 5	mǐjàlì 4
vagina	sùbélélé 9	sùbélélé 10
village, city	mbówà 9	màmbówà 6
violence	liànèlì 5	liànèlì 5
vulture	wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14
wall	èzrù 7	βèzrù 8
war	ndzùmá 9	ndzùmá 10
water	màlìβá 6	màlìβá 6
water pot	dzòngó dzá 'málíwá 19	βèóngó βé 'málíwá 8
whisper	βèzràzrà 8	βèzràzrà 8
wife	mólánà 1	βálánà 2
wind	mbèβèni 9	mbèβèni 10
wine/beer (general word)	mímbá 9	mímbá 10
witch	mwimbà 1	βàimbà 2
woman	mólánà 1	βálánà 2
word	èèjà 7	βèèjà 8
work	èwòlò 7	βèwòlò 8
yam	jònò 7	βèònò 8
year	ɲmà 3	mèà 4

2. Adjectives

bad	wòβê
big	lǒlòwà, ndénè
cold	lizrimá
dry	lìzróndzò
full	lǔndà
good	gbǎmù
hard	lètá
heavy	lilitá
hot	litùmbáná
left	ɲmàlì
long	lìwàwá
new	βéjà
old	mònùnì

right	mǒmè
short	lǔtùwà
small	zràli
strong	lǐmbàmà
wet	lìtìtá
white	mbómí

3. Verbs

	<i>Isolation form</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>
abuse	βέηê	lìβέηê
agree	éméâ	lěmèâ
answer	áláφê	lǎlâφê
arrive	úkâ	lǔkâ
ask	ídzówâ	lǐdzòwâ
bathe	ókô	lǒkô
be born	jááβâ	lìjááβâ
be broken	òméâ	lòmèâ
be certain	φíjâ	lìφíjâ
be closed	úmbánâ	lǔmbànâ
be deceived (by sb.)	òndzóβô	lòndzóβó
be dislocated	wókéâ	lìwókèâ
be extinguished	límízzrêβê	lìlímízzrêβê
be fermented	φángéâ	lìφángèâ
be from	úηméâ	lǔηmèâ
be giddy, tired	òtô	lòtô
be given	ηgbááβâ	lìηgbááβâ
be gone	jónηgô	lìjónηgò
be hard	ètâ	lètâ
be heard	wéénê	lìwéèné
be hot, boiled	túmbánâ	lìtúmbánâ
be killed	ónwáβâ	lǒηwàβâ
be long, tall	wâwâ	lìwâwâ
be mad, crazy	kprávâ	lìkprávâ
be painful, hot	òkô	lòkô
be quick	βámízzrê	lìβámízzrê
be quiet, silent	ándámâ	lǎndàmâ
be repaired (by sb.)	zzréáβâ	lìzzréáβâ
be rotten	jâmâ	lìjâmâ
be spoiled	φángéâ	lìφángèâ
be straightened	ténéβê	lìténèβê
be suspended	φánéβê	lìφánéβê
be tied	kákáβâ	lìkákâβâ
be twisted	nótóβô	lìnótóβó
bear (a child)	jâ	lìjâ

beat	tíjâ (tíà)	litíjâ (litíà)
beat (drum)	kúmbâ	likúmbâ
become cracked	kándéâ	likándèà
become lame	kpézárófá	likpézárófà
become loosen	βúndúwéâ	liβúndúwéá
become snapped	wéndéâ	liwéndèà
begin	βótéjâ	liβótéjâ
bite	kókâ	likókâ
blow (mouth)	úṅgélê	lũṅgèlè
blow (wind)	tóngâ	litóngâ
boast	kùmbâ ṅgèṅgè	likùmbâ ṅgèṅgè
bow	zrùmâ	lizrùmâ
break	βéndê	liβéndè
break	gbâ	ligbâ
bring	dʒàná	lidʒàná
build	óngâ	lõṅgâ
burn	zrélê	lizrélè
burry	íméjâ	lĩmèjâ
burst	úmúwâ	lũmùwâ
buy	àndâ	làndâ
call	βélê	liβélè
carry	àndʒílê	làndʒílé
carve	wèkâ	liwèká
catch	ṇàṅgâ	liṇàṅgâ
catch (animal)	lèmbê	lilèmbé
cause sb. to buy	àndízá	làndízà
cause sb. to laugh	jóízrê	lijóízrè
cause sb. to quarrel	tówízá	litówízrè
cause sb. to sell	àβízáréléê	làβízáréléé
change	èṅgówâ	lèṅgówá
choose	βòzró	liβòzró
clear	ùfâ	lùfâ
clear, cut grass	zrázrà	lizrázrà
climb	àgbâ	làgbâ
close	úmbâ	lũmbâ
come	dʒá	lidʒă
cook	iβê	liβé
count	áṅgâ	lãṅgâ
cover	φándâ	liφándâ
crack	kándâ	likándâ
cultivate	ónâ	lõnâ
cut	kê	likê
dance	zrà	lizrà
deceive	òndʒó	lòndʒó

defecate	ɲâ	lɪɲâ
deny, disclaim	zròzrô	lɪzròzrô
descend	óndô	lɔ́ndô
descend	zrìwâ	lɪzrìwâ
die	ɲwâ	lɪɲwâ
dig	ímâ	lɪmâ
discover	φíjâ	lɪφíjâ
dislocate	wókâ	lɪwókâ
divide	kàwâ	lɪkàwâ
do	gbèjâ	lɪgbèjâ
drag, pull	kóówâ	lɪkóòwâ
dream	nàɲgâ ndótó	lɪnàɲgâ ndótó
dress	wótô	lɪwótô
drink	ɲó	lɪɲó
dry	émbê	lɛ́mbê
dry (cloth)	támbê	lɪtámbê
dry (fish)	zróɲgí zrê	lɪzróɲgí zrê
dwell	lìjâ	lɪlìjâ
eat	lâ	lɪlâ
enter	kpééjâ	lɪkpééjâ
expose	éɲélélê	lɛ́ɲélélê
extinguish	límí zrê	lɪlímí zrê
fall	pkâ	lɪpkâ
fear	béjâ	lɪbéjâ
fear	ókâ wóɲgó	lɔ́ká wóɲgó
feed	líí zrê	lɪlíí zrê
fight	ànâ	lànâ
finish	kúlê	lɪkúlê
fly	kòówâ	lɪkòówâ
follow	nòɲgó	lɪnòɲgó
follow	βálâ	lɪβálâ
fool	lúkélê	lɪlúkélê
forget	βóɲgâ	lɪβóɲgâ
forgive	làkí zrê	lɪlàkí zrê
fry	áɲgâ	lǎɲgâ
gather	zràɲgâ	lɪzràɲgâ
get	lùwâ	lɪlùwâ
give	ɲgbâ	lɪɲgbâ
give birth	ɲâ	lɪɲâ
go	ndê	lèndê
go to	èndéâ	lèndéâ
greet	kómô	lɪkómô
grind	zríkâ	lɪzríkâ
hang	áβánê	lǎβànê

hang (generic)	ḡàné	lìḡàné
have	ḡénê	lìḡénê
hear	ḡéjà	lìḡéjà
help	ónḡwánâ	lónḡwánâ
hit	lìḡâ	lìlìḡâ
hoe, beat	tíjà (tíâ)	lìtíjà (lìtíâ)
hold	lèmbê	lìlèmbê
hunt	íẏróḡô	lìẏróḡô
hurt	ókâ	lókâ
inform	ḡílê	lìḡílê
inherit	ẏráḡóḡâ	lìẏráḡóḡâ
jump	ḡándẏâ	lìḡándẏâ
kill	ónwâ	lónwâ
kneel	ẏrùmâ	lìẏrùmâ
know	ḡíjà	lìḡíjà
laugh	jòô	lìjò
leak	tô	lìtô
learn	ókówâ	lókówâ
lick	tèmbê	lìtèmbê
lie down	kónḡâ môẏré	lìkónḡâ môẏré
like	lìḡánâ	lìlìḡánâ
live, to grow	ónḡâ	lónḡâ
look	ónḡô	lónḡô
look for	ónḡô or àẏrâ	lónḡô or làẏrâ
loose	wólénê	lìwólénê
loosen	ḡúndúwâ	lìḡúndúwâ
lose	wólê	lìwólê
lose (way)	tónâ	lìtónâ
love	lìḡánâ	lìlìḡánâ
make	ḡbèjà	lìḡbèjà
meet	ùnḡmâ	lùnḡmâ
mould (pot)	ónḡóówâ	lónḡóóówâ
move quickly	ḡíndẏílê	lìḡíndẏílê
open	lìḡówâ	lìlìḡówâ
pass	ákâ	lākâ
pay	tánḡâ	lìtánḡâ
pierce	túwâ	lìtúwâ
pierce	únḡmâ	lùnḡmâ
plait	ḡíndâ	lìḡíndâ
plant	ónâ	lónâ
play	ókâ	lókâ
pound	kòkô	lìkòkô
pour	ẏròlê	lìẏròlê
pour	kâmbówâ	lìkâmbówâ

pour (drinks)	kómâ	likómâ
promise	kákénê	likákénê
pull, drag	zríimâ	lìzríimâ
push	tíndélê	lìtíndélê
put on	wótô	lìwótô
quarrel	tówô	lìtówô
read	lángâ	lìlángâ
refuse	βángâ	lìβángâ
refuse (s.o. sth)	wùnâ	lìwùnâ
remember	òngélê	lòngélê
repair	zréjá	lìzréjá
reply	tìmbízárlélê	lìtìmbízárlélê
return	tìmbá	lìtìmbá
roast	túmbê	lìtúmbê
rotten	zròmbô	lìzròmbô
run	βángâ	lìβángâ
say	ófâ	lǒβâ
see	énê	lěnê
sell	àbízáre	làβízáre
send	ómâ	lǒmâ
shoot	úṣmâ	lǔṣmâ
show	úṣwélê	lǔṣwélê
sing	émbâ	lěmbâ
sit down	lìí'ózáre	lìlìí'ózáre
sit, remain, stay	lìjá	lìlìjá
sleep	nàngâ	lìnàngâ
snap	wéndê	lìwéndê
sow	kólô	likólô
speak	tóízáre	lìtóízáre
spit	zró	lìzró
split	kándâ	likándâ
spoil	φángâ	lìφángâ
stand up	témê	lìtémê
steal	íbâ	lǐbâ
stick	kákúménê	likákúménê
stink	úṣmâ	lǔṣmâ
straighten	ténénê	lìténénê
summon	jówê	lìjówê
swallow	mêê	lìmê
sweep	tútâ	lìtútâ
swell	ítâ	lǐtâ
take	wówâ	lìwówâ
take off	úlê	lǔlê
talk	óbâ	lǒβâ

taste	ókánéâ	lőkànéâ
teach	ókólê	lőkòlê
teach (cause sb. to learn)	ókówízrê	lőkòwizrê
tear	ɲááwâ	lɲàáwá
think	lùtėjâ	lilùtėjá
throw	βimbâ	liβimbá
throw (mystic)	àngbâ	làngbá
tie	kákâ	likákâ
touch	tózirô	litózirô
travel	èndê	lèndê
try	kèkâ	likèkâ
twist	nòtô	linòtó
unite	džónô	lidžónò
untie	wùndúwâ	liwùndúwá
urinate	ɲâ	lɲâ
vomit	jówâ	lijówá
wait	ámbéłê	lámbéłê
wake up	imówâ	limówá
walk	èndê	lèndê
want, to desire	àzrâ	làzrá
wash	zròzrâ	lizròzrá
wash (wish soap)	ókô	lőkò
light	βàálê	liβàálê

2. Mokpe - English

1. Nouns

Singular	Plural	
bíndzì 9	íbíndzì 10	beans
džòŋgó 19	βèóŋgó 8	pot
džòŋgó dzá 'málíwá 19	βèóŋgó βé 'málíwá 8	water pot
džòŋgó dzá 'mólélí 19	βèóŋgó βé 'mólélí 8	cooking pot
džěmè 9	džěmè 10	tongue
džítítí 9	wiítítí 10	darkness
džòlí 19	βèòlí 8	firewood
džòŋgó 19	βèòŋgó 8	eagle
džóβì 9	džóβì 19	speech
džùŋgù 19	βjùŋgù 8	mosquito
èèjà 7	βèèjà 8	word
èèjé 7	βèèjé 8	tree, stick
èèkè 7	βèèkè 8	iron (metal)
éélélé 7	βèélélé 8	dawn
èèzré 7	βèèzré 8	bone
ègbíé 7	βègbíé 8	banana

èjémbé 9	βèjémbé 8	animal
èkòkà mòtò 7	βèkòkà βé βàtò 8	old person
èlèlà 7	βèlèlà 8	duck
élówàlòwà 7	élówàlòwà 7	moon
èlùwà 7	βèlùwà 8	market
ètò 7	βètò 8	rat
èwókà 7	βèwókà 8	compound
èwòlò 7	βèwòlò 8	work
èwùlé 7	βèwùlé 8	grass
èzráí or èzrájí 7	βèzráí or βèzrájí 8	feather
èzrózró 7	βèzrózró 8	thigh
èzrù 7	βèzrù 8	wall
èβùβà 7	βèβùβà 8	rainy season
gbààβá 9	mààβá 6	snake
gbèé 9	màé 6	tablet
gbító 14	màító or màjító 6	story
ìgbê 19	ìgbê 19	sun, sunshine
ìkpá 9	ìkpá 9	salt
ìkúlèkùlè 9	ìkúlèkùlè 10	tortoise
ìlándzò 19	màlándzò 6	orange
ìnòní 19	βènòní 8	bird
ìndókó 9	βèndókó 8	pepper
ítámbí 19	βètámbí 8	shoe
ìwùṅgá 19	βèwùṅgá 8	stomach (internal)
ìzrázrí 19	βèzrázrí 8	mat
ìzròzré 19	βèzròzré 8	crab
jàlí 7	βèálí 8	leaf
jǎzrù 7	βèázrù 8	chin
jǎndò 19	βèóndò 8	axe
jòkó 7	βèòkó 8	penis
jòkpá mbóli 7	jòkpá á mbóli 7	he-goat
jòkpè 7	βèòkpè 8	dry season
jǒmà 7	βěmà 8	thing
jònò 7	βèònò 8	yam
kó 9	kó 10	snail
kémà 9	íkémà 10	monkey
kingè 9	íkingè 10	chief
kingè 9	íkingè 10	king
kòòfà 9	kòòfà 10	calabash
lǎndzì 5	màándzì 6	boat/canoe
liànèlì 5	liànèlì 5	violence
lǐbà 5	lǐbà 5	theth
lijá 5	màá 6	hand
lǐjà 5	mǐjà 6	palm oil

lìjòṅgó 5	màṅṅó 6	spear (war)
lìjé 5	màjé 6	stone
lìjé lá 'lì'zríkà 5	màjé má 'lì'zríkà 6	grinding stone
lìjé lí ndókó 5	màjé má ndókó 6	grinding stone
likàwò 5	màkàwò 6	macabo
likò 5	mèkò 4	plantain
likózrí 5	màkózrí 6	bow (weapon)
likpà 5	măkpà 6	bag
likpàmbà 5	màkpàmbà 6	cassava
lilàngà 5	lilàngà 6	read
lìnà 5	mǐnà 6	name
lìṇàlì 5	mǐṇàlì 4	urine
línàngá 5	línàngá 5	sleep
liòḃá 5	màòḃá 6	door
lìtô 5	màtô 6	ear
liwò 5	màwò 6	neck
liwèndì 5	màwèndì 6	knife
liwû 5	liwû 5	ashes
lìzràndzá 5	màzràndzá 6	mud
lìzrò 5	mǐzrò 6	eye
lìzròṅgá 5	màzròṅgá 6	tooth
liḃàngà 5	màḃàngà 6	race
liḃê 5	màḃê 6	breast (female)
liḃèlú 5	màḃèlú 6	kola nut
liḃèḃè 5	màḃèḃè 6	lap
liḃùmbú 5	màḃùmbú 6	hair (head)
lǐàmà 5	màámà 6	jaw
lǐṅṅóṅṅó 5	màṅṅóṅṅó 6	knee
lǒwá 5	mǒṇwá or mǒwá 6	fascies
lǒḃè 9	lǒḃè 10	God
lùàtù 5	mààtù 6	cloth (material)
lǔtùtù 5	ḃiùtùtù 8	smoke
lùṅṅá 5	màṅṅá 6	belly (external)
lùútù 5	màwútù 6	rubbish heap
lùwàtù 5	mààtù 6	fabric
mààlì 6	mààlì 6	money
màjidzá 6	màjidzá 6	blood
màlìḃá 6	màlìḃá 6	water
mànòno 6	mànòno 6	fat
mátà (loan, Eng.) 6	mátà 6	mortar
màwúdzà 6	màwúdzà 6	oil
mbákì 9	mbákì 10	encouragement
mbàzrì 9	ímbàzrì 10	maize
mbèzrà 9	ímbèzrà 10	son

mbèḃèṇì 9	mbèḃèṇì 10	wind
mbö 9	ímbö 10	banana
mbóli 9	mbóli 10	goat
mbòndò 9	mbòndò 10	buttocks
mbówà 9	màmbówà 6	village, city
mbúndá 9	ímbúndá 10	friend
mbúwà 9	mbúwà 10	rain
mbúzrà 9	mbúzrà 10	back
mò 3	mèò 4	arm
mòòlí 3	mèòlí 4	rope
mòòṇè 3	mèòṇè 4	ground
mǒlèṇḡù 3	mǐlèṇḡù 4	sheep
mòndénè 1	ḃàndénè 2	notable
mòṇè 3	mèṇè 4	earth (soil)
mòzròkò 3	mèzròkò 4	song
mòzròṇḡòzròṇḡò 1	ḃàzròṇḡòzròṇḡò 2	hunter
mímbá 9	mímbá 10	wine/beer (general word)
mímbá málìjà 9	mímbá málìjà 10	palm wine
mòkòṇá 3	mèkòṇá 4	door (with palm leaves)
mòláló 3	mèláló 4	mother's brother
mólánà 1	ḃálánà 2	wife
mólánà 1	ḃálánà 2	woman
mòlàṅgà 3	mèlàṅgà 4	lie
mòlélí 3	mèlélí 4	food
mòlí 3	mèlí 4	mountain
mómá wǔḃà 9	wòmé ḃá wǔḃà 10	cock
mǒmè 3	mèómè 4	male
mòòndó 3	mèòndó 4	tail
mòòwò 3	mèòwò 4	skin
mòòwò mó èèjé 3	mèòwò mé èèjé 4	bark (of tree)
mòóḃò 3	mèóḃò 4	head
mòtò 1	ḃàtò 2	person
mòzréwá 3	mèzréwá 4	horn
mǒzrìṅgà 3	mǐzrìṅgà 4	thread
mòzrô 3	mèzrô 4	river
mòḃàndzá 3	mèḃàndzá 4	arrow
mòḃémbé 3	mèḃémbé 4	nose
mùàṅgá 3	mèàṅgá 4	seed
múlú'lú 1	ḃàwúlú'lú 2	senior/older
múná 3	míúná or mǐjúná 4	fire
múnánà 1	wúnánà 2	husband
múnánà 1	wúnánà 2	man
mwàṅgá 3	mèàṅgá 4	root
mwĩbè 1	ḃàĩbè or ḃàjĩbè 2	thief

mwimbà 1	βàimbà 2	witch
mwimbà 3	miimba 4	corpse
ɲààwè 9	ínààwè 10	bee
ɲàkà 9	ɲàkà or ínàkà 10	cow
ɲàmà 9	ɲàmà 10	meat, animal
ɲàmà málíwà 9	ɲàmà dʒá málíwà 10	fish
ɲáŋgá 9	ɲáŋgá 10	sand
ɲàŋgó 9	ínàŋgó 10	mother
ndáwò 9	màndáwò 6	house
ndòndòkì 9	ndòndòkì 10	needle
ndzàwù 9	ndzàwù 10	hunger
ndzòkù 9	índzòkù 10	elephant
ndzóló 9	ndzóló 10	lizard
ndzééndzée 9	índzééndzée 10	thorn
ndzù má 9	ndzù má 10	war
ndzúŋgù 9	ndzúŋgù 10	navel
ɲìjá 9	ɲìjá 10	louse
ɲìɲì 9	ɲìɲì 10	housefly
ɲìzrè 9	ɲìzrè 10	thirst
ɲô 9	ɲô or í'no 10	body
ŋgàndà 9	íŋgàndà 10	nail
ŋgàndó 9	ŋgàndó 10	crocodile
ŋgàngà 9	βààngàngè 2	doctor
ŋgàtá 9	íŋgàtá 10	basket
ŋgbà 9	íŋgbà 10	dog
ŋgòndó 9	ŋgòndó 10	groundnut
ŋgòndò 9	íŋgòndò 10	daughter
ŋgèjété 9	ŋgèjété 10	money
ŋgòmbá 9	ŋgòmbá 10	porcupine
ŋgòɲà 9	íŋgòɲà 10	soup/sauce/stew
ŋgòwá 9	íŋgòwá 10	pig
ɲmà 3	mèà 4	year
ɲmă 3	mèá 4	hoe
ɲmálí 1	βáálí 2	female
ɲmánà 1	βánà 2	child
ɲmándzà 3	mèándzà 4	sea
ɲmànò 3	mèànò 4	trick
ɲmèèní 1	βàèní 2	guest
ɲmēmà 3	mèémà 4	heart
ɲmēmè 3	mèémè 4	bat
ɲmèndé 3	mèéndé 4	leg
ɲmèŋgé 3	mèéŋgé 4	new-born
ɲmèó 3	mèó or mèjó 4	egg
ɸàkó 9	ɸàkó 10	mount Cameroon

pùzrí (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	pùzrí 10	cat
sùbélélé 9	sùbélélé 10	vagina
táǎkù (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	táǎkù 10	tobacco
tàmbá 9	ítàmbá 10	hat/cap
tátè 9	βààtátè 2	father
tóngóngó 9	tóngóngó 10	side
tʃólóló 9	tʃólóló 10	penis
tũ 9	ítũ 10	room
wàná 14	wàná 14	mouth
wàngá 9	íwàngá 10	bush, farm
wòkpò 14	wòkpò 14	beard
wǒlò 14	wǒlò 14	boat/canoe
wóngó 14	wóngó 14	fear
wózrì (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 14	íwózrì 10	horse
wòlì 14	wòlì 14	money
wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14	kite
wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14	vulture
wû 14	màwũ 6	night
wúná 9	wúná 10	day
wúfà 14	wúfà 14	fowl
wũβà 14	dzũβà 10	chicken
zròwè 9	zròwè 10	dust
zrómbé 9	í'zrómbé 10	star
βáo 9	βáo 10	machete
βòngò 9	íβòngò 10	seed
βèólì 8	βèólì 8	saliva
βèzràzrà 8	βèzràzrà 8	whisper
βíndí à líjò 9	βíndí à líjò 10	charcoal
βòndzà 9	βòndzà 10	permission

2. Adjectives

gbāmù	good
lètá	hard
lilitá	heavy
lĩmbàmà	strong
lititá	wet
litùmbáná	hot
liwàwá	long
lìzróndzò	dry
lìzrimá	cold
lǒlòwà, ndénè	big
lũndà	full
lũtùwà	short
mbómí	white

mòmè	right
mònùnì	old
ḡmàlí	left
wòβê	bad
zràli	small
βépá	new

3. Verbs

Isolation form	Infinitive	
àgbá	làgbá	climb
áká	lākà	pass
áláφê	lālāφê	answer
ámbélê	lāmbèlê	wait
ànâ	làná	fight
àndâ	låndá	buy
ándámâ	låndàmâ	be quiet, silent
àndíẏrê	låndíẏré	cause sb. to buy
àndẏílê	låndẏílé	carry
àngâ	lāngà	count
àngâ	lāngà	fry
àngbâ	làngbá	throw (mystic)
àzrà	làzrà	want, to desire
áβánê	lāβànè	hang
àβíẏrê	làβíẏré	sell
àβíẏrélélê	làβíẏrélélé	cause sb. to sell
ókô	lőkò	bathe
ókô	lőkò	wash (wish soap)
ókólê	lőkòlê	teach
óndô	lõndò	descend
òndẏô	lòndẏó	deceive
òndẏóβô	lòndẏóβó	be deceived (by sb.)
òngô	lõngò	look
òngó or àzrà	lõngò or làzrà	look for
òngélê	lòngélé	remember
dẏá	lìdẏă	come
dẏànâ	lìdẏànâ	bring
dẏónô	lìdẏónò	unite
émbâ	lěmbà	sing
émbê	lěmbè	dry
éméâ	lěmèâ	agree
èndê	lèndé	travel
èndê	lèndé	walk
èndéâ	lèndéâ	go to
énê	lěnè	see

éṣéṣéṣé	lěṣéṣéṣé	expose
èṅgówá	lèṅgówá	change
ètá	lètá	be hard
gbâ	lìgbâ	break
gbèjà	lìgbèjà	do
gbèjà	lìgbèjà	make
íbâ	lìbâ	steal
ídžówá	lìdžówá	ask
ímâ	lìmâ	dig
íméjà	lìméjà	burry
ìmówá	lìmówá	wake up
ìṣnâ	lìṣnâ	urinate
ítâ	lìtâ	swell
íẏròṅgò	lìẏròṅgò	hunt
ìṣé	lìṣé	cook
jâ	lìjâ	bear (a child)
jááṣâ	lìjááṣâ	be born
jòṣ	lìjòṣ	laugh
jóíẏré	lìjòíẏré	cause sb. to laugh
jówá	lìjówá	vomit
jówê	lìjówê	summon
kákâ	lìkákâ	tie
kákáṣâ	lìkákáṣâ	be tied
kákénê	lìkákénê	promise
kákúménê	lìkákúménê	stick
kàmbówá	lìkàmbówá	pour
kándâ	lìkándâ	crack
kándâ	lìkándâ	split
kándéâ	lìkándéâ	become cracked
kàwâ	lìkàwâ	divide
kòkò	lìkòkò	pound
kólò	lìkólò	sow
kómò	lìkómò	greet
kê	lìkê	cut
kèkâ	lìkèkâ	try
kókâ	lìkókâ	bite
kómâ	lìkómâ	pour (drinks)
kóṅgá mōẏré	lìkóṅgá mōẏré	lie down
kóówá	lìkóówá	drag, pull
kòówá	lìkòówá	fly
kṣáṣnâ	lìkṣáṣnâ	be mad, crazy
kṣééjà	lìkṣééjà	enter
kṣéẏróṣâ	lìkṣéẏróṣâ	become lame
kúlê	lìkúlê	finish

kúmbâ	likúmbà	beat (drum)
kùmbâ ngèngè	likùmbá ngèngè	boast
lâ	lilâ	eat
làkízá	lilàkízá	forgive
lángâ	lilángà	read
lèmbê	lilèmbé	catch (animal)
lèmbê	lilèmbé	hold
líízá	lilíízá	feed
lí'ózá	lilí'ózá	sit down
lijâ	lilijá	dwell
lijâ	lilijá	sit, remain, stay
líímízá	lilímízá	extinguish
líímízáβê	lilímízáβè	be extinguished
lìngánâ	lilìngáná	love
lìngánâ	lilìngáná	like
liβâ	lilìβá	hit
liβówâ	lilìβówá	open
lúkélê	lilúkélé	fool
lùtéjâ	lilùtéjá	think
lùwâ	lilùwá	get
mèê	lìmě	swallow
nâ	lìñâ	defecate
nâ	lìñâ	give birth
nááwâ	lìñááwá	tear
nàmâ	lìñámá	be rotten
nàngâ	lìnàngá	sleep
nàngâ	lìnàngá	catch
nàngâ ndótó	lìnàngá ndótó	dream
nó	lìñó	drink
nòngô	lìnòngó	follow
nòtô	lìnòtó	twist
nótóβô	lìnòtóβó	be twisted
ndê	lèndé	go
nóngô	lìñóngò	be gone
ngbâ	lìngbă	give
ngbááβâ	lìngbăáβá	be given
ñwâ	lìñwâ	die
ókâ	lőkâ	hurt
òkâ	lòkâ	play
ókâ wóngó	lőká wóngó	fear
ókánêâ	lőkànèà	taste
òkô	lòkó	be painful, hot
ókówâ	lòkòwà	learn
ókówízá	lòkòwízá	teach (cause sb. to learn)

ómâ	lǒmà	send
òméâ	lòmèá	be broken
ónâ	lǒnà	cultivate
ónâ	lǒnà	plant
òṅgâ	lǒṅgà	build
òṅgâ	lòṅgá	live, to grow
òṅgóówâ	lòṅgóówá	mould (pot)
òṅgwánâ	lǒṅgwànà	help
òṅwâ	lǒṅwà	kill
òṅwáβâ	lǒṅwáβà	be killed
ófâ	lǒβà	say
òtô	lòtó	be giddy, tired
óbâ	lǒβà	talk
φándâ	lìφándà	cover
φànê	lìφànê	hang (generic)
φánéβê	lìφànέβê	be suspended
φángâ	lìφángà	spoil
φángéâ	lìφángèâ	be fermented
φángéâ	lìφángèâ	be spoiled
φíjâ	lìφíjà	be certain
φíjâ	lìφíjà	discover
φíndzílê	lìφíndzìlê	move quickly
pkâ	lìpkâ	fall
támbê	lìtámbê	dry (cloth)
tángâ	lìtángà	pay
tô	lìtô	leak
tóí zrê	lìtòí zrê	speak
tówô	lìtówô	quarrel
tówí zrê	lìtówí zrê	cause sb. to quarrel
tó zrô	lìtózrô	touch
tèmbê	lìtèmbê	lick
témê	lìtémê	stand up
ténénê	lìténènê	straighten
ténéβê	lìténèβê	be straightened
tíjâ (tíâ)	lìtíjà (lìtíâ)	beat
tíjâ (tíâ)	lìtíjà (lìtíâ)	hoe, beat
tìmbá	lìtìmbá	return
tìmbí zrélélê	lìtìmbí zrélélê	reply
tíndélê	lìtíndèlê	push
tònâ	lìtònâ	lose (way)
tóngâ	lìtóngà	blow (wind)
túmbánâ	lìtúmbánâ	be hot, boiled
túmbê	lìtúmbê	roast
tútâ	lìtútâ	sweep

túwâ	litúwâ	pierce
úkâ	lǔkâ	arrive
úlê	lǔlê	take off
úmbâ	lǔmbâ	close
úmbánâ	lǔmbànâ	be closed
úmúwâ	lǔmùwâ	burst
úṅgélê	lǔṅgèlê	blow (mouth)
úṅmâ	lǔṅmâ	pierce
úṅmâ	lǔṅmâ	shoot
úṅmâ	lǔṅmâ	stink
ùṅmâ	lùṅmâ	meet
úṅmèâ	lǔṅmèâ	be from
úṅwélê	lǔṅwèlê	show
ùfâ	lùfâ	clear
wàwâ	lìwàwâ	be long, tall
wókâ	lìwókâ	dislocate
wókèâ	lìwókèâ	be dislocated
wólê	lìwólê	lose
wólénê	lìwólénê	loose
wótô	lìwótô	dress
wótô	lìwótô	put on
wéénê	lìwéénê	be heard
wèkâ	lìwèkâ	carve
wéndê	lìwéndê	snap
wéndéâ	lìwéndèâ	become snapped
wówâ	lìwówâ	take
wùnâ	lìwùnâ	refuse (s.o. sth)
wùndúwâ	lìwùndúwâ	untie
zrâ	lìzrâ	dance
zràṅgâ	lìzràṅgâ	gather
zràṅgófâ	lìzràṅgófâ	inherit
zrázrâ	lìzrázrâ	clear, cut grass
zrô	lìzrô	spit
zròlê	lìzròlê	pour
zròmbô	lìzròmbô	rotten
zróṅgí zrê	lìzróṅgí zrê	dry (fish)
zròzrô	lìzròzrô	deny, disclaim
zréáβâ	lìzréáβâ	be repaired (by sb.)
zrééjâ	lìzrééjâ	repair
zrélê	lìzrélê	burn
zríimâ	lìzríimâ	pull, drag
zríkâ	lìzríkâ	grind
zrìwâ	lìzrìwâ	descend
zròzrâ	lìzròzrâ	wash

zrùmâ	lìzrùmá	bow
zrùmâ	lìzrùmá	kneel
βálâ	lìβálâ	follow
βámíẏrê	lìβámìẏrê	be quick
βándẏâ	lìβándẏâ	jump
βángâ	lìβángâ	refuse
βángâ	lìβángâ	run
βòẏrô	lìβòẏró	choose
βéjâ	lìβéjâ	fear
βéjâ	lìβéjâ	hear
βélê	lìβélê	call
βéndê	lìβéndê	break
βénê	lìβénê	have
βéẏê	lìβéẏê	abuse
βíjâ	lìβíjâ	know
βílê	lìβílê	inform
βimbâ	lìβimbâ	throw
βindâ	lìβindâ	plait
βóngâ	lìβóngâ	forget
βótéjâ	lìβótéjâ	begin
βúndúwâ	lìβúndúwâ	loosen
βúndúwéâ	lìβúndúwéâ	become loosen
βàálê	lìβàálê	light

NOTES

- (1) This information is taken from Lewis (2009).
- (2) The symbols used are from the IPA chart.
- (3) The term is borrowed from Urs (1996) but is assigned a slightly different meaning here.
- (4) This grapheme, as well as R, r, and Ʒ, ʒ will never appear alone and will never appear at word-initial position.
- (5) This grapheme can appear alone and word-initially only in borrowed words.
- (6) This grapheme, as well as Z, z, cannot appear alone, but can be seen at word- or syllable-initial.
- (7) The second person singular is in fact [ò]. However, it is realised as [ɔ̃] when the following vowel (of the verb root) is either [ɔ] or [ɛ]. Note that this is the only instance where we find the vowel [ɔ] at word-initial position in the whole corpus.
- (8) Kagaya (1992a) and Connell (1997) identified a nasal prefix for classes 9 and 10, i.e. N-/N-. As you have noticed, the plural forms either maintains the N- prefix or take high-toned vowel í- as prefix. The high-toned prefix í- may be seen as a remnant of the original augment which remained in plurals. There seems to be absolutely no principle governing the use of that vowel as prefix. However, the tendency seems to be the use of N- prefix for both classes 9 and 10.
- (9) Some of these nouns do not have a plural counterpart because they are abstract words.
- (10) This reminds us of the following statement of Batibo (2005: 2): "The most common modal forms in Bantu languages include the indicative, usually represented by the suffix -a and the subjunctive, represented by the suffix -e.
- (11) Note that němbè is from nà + ěmbè.
- (12) From nà + éndè.
- (13) From βá + éjè.
- (14) It is also possible to have: nè é βéli ndí mòlèli.
- (15) It is also possible to have: ì í βéli ndí bàlèli.
- (16) It is also possible to have: βé é βéli ndí bàlèli.
- (17) The morpheme ó of the locative abverb is realised w- when it occurs before vowels.
- (18) "I am here" can also be said: nà βé 'lànù. In fact, βéli ndí can be contracted to give βéli í or éli í. This happens mostly in rapid speech. For example we recorded ò éli í múpánà "you are a man." On the other hand, note that the morpheme ó of the locative abverb is deleted before "here" and "there."
- (19) The vowel [a] of the 1sg and 3pl is deleted before -úwélélé. For the 2sg and 3sg, the glide [w] is inserted between the subject pronoun and -úwélélé. As for 1pl and 2pl, their subject pronouns become [dʒ] and [j] respectively before -úwélélé.

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Author's Name and Address: Gratien ATINDOGBE, *Department of Linguistics, University of Buea, Buea, South West Region, CAMEROON.*

E-mail: grat_atin [at] yahoo.com